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BLACK ROCK: MINING FOLKLORE OF THE PENNSYLVANIA DUTCH

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BLACK

ROCK



MINING FOLKLORE OF THE
PENNSYLVANIA DUTCH

GEORGE KORSON

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FOREWORD

The Pennsylvania German Society is proud to present *BLACK ROCK: Mining Folklore of the Pennsylvania Dutch* to its members and to recommend it enthusiastically to the public. This carefully documented book of history and folklore unfolds a fascinating story about the Pennsylvania Germans, commonly known as the "Pennsylvania Dutch." In a warm, very readable style, the author, George Korson, shows how the Pennsylvania Germans played a dominant role in the development of the hard-coal industry during an era when the United States was rising to world leadership as an industrial power, and anthracite was the key fuel. This hitherto obscure chapter in American history proves that the Pennsylvania Germans, long praised for their agricultural achievements, had a much greater share in the anthracite industry than had even been imagined. Here, for the first time, the record is presented in detail.

Folklore interspersed with historical material lends human interest appeal to this book. Mr. Korson recorded the folklore under a Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship in 1957. This folklore helps to paint an intimate picture of the Pennsylvania Germans in the anthracite industry. George Korson is uniquely qualified for the writing of this learned work. Reared in the hard-coal region, he has also lived and worked among the Pennsylvania Germans in Lehigh County. Furthermore, as a nationally-known folklorist, he has long collected and studied the folk culture of the anthracite region and of the Pennsylvania Germans. He was destined to bring the two together. His seven previously published books were a prelude which prepared him for the task of writing this monumental volume. The task required Mr. Korson's full time for more than three of his maturest years as a scholar.

Homer T. Rosenberger
President
Pennsylvania German Society



WILLIAM S. TRONELL 1893-1957
President of The Pennsylvania German Society 1952-1957

PREFACE

My approach to folklore is through its creators and carriers—the people. They live folklore and express their innermost thoughts and feelings through it. They are reluctant to part with it because it forms an intimate part of their lives. Ultimately only those collectors who win their confidence succeed in obtaining from them “those flowing unconscious patterns of mind and feeling which create fundamental outlines in expression,” in the words of Constance Rourke.

While engaged in this project during the past three years, I found a new respect for the importance of folklore as a cultural force and expression. More than ever do I believe in the functional view of folklore, in which the folk receive equal attention with the lore. In folklore, function is as important as content.

What do I mean by the term “function”? Louis C. Jones, director of the New York State Historical Association, offers this definition:

Folklore is the most fragile kind of history there is—so fragile and so easily lost and forgotten that if people don't take the time to record it, a whole segment of the people's lives is lost with it. Folklore is the part of history which is unwritten, because it lives on the people's tongues and in their everyday ways, until somebody takes the trouble to preserve it. It is as important to know the songs men sang and the recipes women baked by, the yarns they spun and the customs they observed, as it is to know how they voted. But these are such simple, homely everyday things that

the historian neglects them—and it is left for the folklorist to fill in the gap.¹

Professor Wayland D. Hand of the University of California, Los Angeles, and ex-president of The American Folklore Society, sees history in these terms:

Compilers of history have told us all about the external and public facts of history . . . of wars and of battles, of legislative enactments and of local ordinances, of the founding of cities and towns, of the rise of industry and commerce, of travel and communication, of religion and education . . . but they have told us very little of individuals and of the family, of the customs and usages of the people, of early sports and pastimes What does history tell us . . . of the early customs and usages surrounding the three main stages of human life: birth, marriage, and death? Precious little This is not intended to be an indictment of professional historians . . . but it is an attempt to say that an important segment of human activity has been lost sight of, and perhaps even a whole dimension of life²

On the folk level there is a wise observation by Mr. Dooley, Finley Peter Dunne's humorous character, who was at his prime in the late nineties and early nineteen hundreds:

I know histry isn't throe, Hennessey, because it ain't like what I see ivry day in Halsted Sthreet. If any wan comes along with a histry iv Greece or Rome that'll show me th' people fightin', gettin' dhrunk, makin' love, gettin' married, owin' th' grocery man an' bein' without hard-coal, I'll believe they was a Greece or Rome, but not before³

Black Rock is Mr. Dooley's kind of history (and, I hope, it is also acceptable to Dr. Jones and Dr. Hand). This is a study of the Pennsylvania Dutch in an unfamiliar setting, in which folklore helps us understand these traditionally agricultural people as they became adjusted to an industrial environment. The book is about a hitherto obscure chapter in American history—the period in the latter half of the nineteenth century when the United States emerged as a leading

1. Louis C. Jones, *Folklore in the Schools: A Student Guide to Collecting Folklore*, a pamphlet, reprinted from *New York Folklore Quarterly*, May, 1946.

2. Wayland D. Hand, "American Folklore after Seventy Years: Survey and Prospect," presidential address at the seventieth annual meeting of the American Folklore Society in New York City, December 27, 1958, *Journal of American Folklore*, LXXIII, No. 287 (January-March, 1960), 1-11.

3. Finley Peter Dunne, *Observations by Mr. Dooley* (New York, 1902), p. 271.

industrial power by using anthracite as its principal metallurgical fuel. Until now only a few people have known that the Pennsylvania Dutch played a dominant role in the development of the anthracite industry.⁴

Black Rock attempts to follow the contours of the Pennsylvania Dutch penetration of the lower end of the anthracite region, a mass movement that had begun before the American Revolution. After the historical background has been painted in, the book focuses on a comparatively small area—the West End of Schuylkill County—for a closeup of the miners who commute between their farm homes and the coal mines in the mountain ridges. Chiefly through their folklore, the Pennsylvania Dutch miners are seen engaged in a variety of activities.

Like the Dead Sea Scrolls, this folklore is of an era that has passed, for the West End anthracite industry, after a century of production, collapsed in the midst of the Depression. The traditional categories of folklore give an insight into the minds and hearts of these people that is beyond the reach of conventional history.

Unlike the Scrolls, however, these oral popular traditions are the expressions of a living people, some quite elderly. Most of the folklore in this volume was recorded in the summer and fall of 1957.

I covered much ground and recorded many people. Lack of space prevented the use of more of my field recordings in this volume, but I have included what I believed to be interesting, significant and characteristic of the Pennsylvania Dutch in what for them was a unique and historic experience.

I wish to thank the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation for honoring me with an award of a fellowship that started this project in 1957.

I am grateful to the Foundation for its encouragement, and to the following individuals for valuable services and counsel: Edith Patterson, Pottsville librarian, retired; The Reverend Thomas R. Brendle, dean of Pennsylvania Dutch folklorists; Dr. Albert F. Buffington, professor of German, The Pennsylvania State University; Dr. Homer T.

4. Bill Roth, "'Dutchmen' Coal Miners," Allentown *Sunday Call-Chronicle*, August 25, 1957. Opening paragraph reads as follows: "That Pennsylvania Dutchmen never worked in coal mines has been accepted as fact for many years in the Lehigh Valley."

Rosenberger, president, The Pennsylvania German Society; J. Benson Adams and Philip M. Ginder who were enormously helpful in my Philip Ginder research efforts; Dr. Paul A. W. Wallace, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission; Mrs. Leroy Sanders, director, Historical Society of Berks County; Elizabeth Kieffer, archivist, Bassler-Unger Collection, Fackenthal Library, Franklin and Marshall College; Dr. Richmond D. Williams, ex-director, Wyoming Historical and Geological Society; my wife, Rac Korson, head, Archive of Folk Song, Library of Congress; James J. Corrigan, Wilkes-Barre; Edward Pinkowski, Philadelphia; Walter S. Farquhar, Herrwood E. Hobbs, and Dr. and Mrs. Harry O. Hoffman, Pottsville.

I am indebted to the following musicians for their careful preparation of my folk song recordings for publication in this volume: Jacob A. Evanson, supervisor of vocal music, Pittsburgh Public Schools System; Edwin B. Spaulding and his wife, Mary G., nee Brendle, of East Brunswick, New Jersey; and Dr. Donald W. Krummel, Music Division, Library of Congress.

My deep appreciation and sincere thanks go to the many librarians who were patient, courteous, and truly helpful during my visits to their public libraries and the reading rooms of their historical societies, chiefly in eastern Pennsylvania.

And my informants! It was a privilege to visit their homes and feel the warmth of their hospitality. A majority were former anthracite miners of Pennsylvania Dutch ancestry, well advanced in years, with mellow memories of their coal-mining experience. I deeply appreciate the folk fantasy and folk knowledge they recorded for me. Nor shall I ever forget their candor and kindness.

George Korson

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PHILIP GINDER, FOLK HERO

It was only the other day, so to speak, that Nature turned a creature out of her workshop, who by degrees acquired sufficient wits to make a fire, and then to discover that the black rock would burn.—*T. H. Huxley*

IT TOOK NATURE MILLIONS OF YEARS TO MAKE ANTHRACITE, OR HARD coal, and millions more to store it for man's use. An old legend tells of its discovery by a German settler, Philip Ginder, on the Sharp Mountain at Summit Hill, Pennsylvania, in 1791.

Ginder, according to one version of the legend, was hunting that day when a sudden fall of rain caused him to turn his weary footsteps homeward before he had shot any game. As he trod slowly, feeling like the most forsaken of human beings because he had no food for his family back in the cabin, the hunter stumbled over some rocks. It was getting dark, but there was still some light for him to see that the rocks were black. Having heard rumors of the existence of "stone coal" up north in the Wyoming Valley, Ginder carried home several pieces for closer inspection. The legend goes on to tell that in the flickering light of his hearth fire the black rocks gleamed.

Philip Ginder was not the first human being, nor even the first white man to experience the thrill of observing an anthracite outcropping for the first time. Nor was he the only Pennsylvania German

settler to have heard about stone coal, if the following excerpt from an early Pennsylvania history is to be believed:

There had been legends of long standing, supposed to have emanated from the Indians, that coal abounded in this section of Pennsylvania; and among some of the credulous German farmers in Lehigh, Berks, Lancaster, one is occasionally reminded of them, and grave intimations thrown out that coal is reposing in "certain places" beneath the luxuriant soil of those counties. Such traditional reports prevailed for a long time among the early settlers of the territory now comprising the several counties of the Anthracite Regions, and if similar reports in the counties above named should ever be realized in the same happy manner, all will unite in admiration of the German stoicism with which they are still maintained by the "elder inhabitants,"¹

Indians were the first human beings to use Pennsylvania anthracite, though not necessarily as fuel. In the summer of 1958, an oil company excavated Sylvan Dell on the south bank of the West Branch of the Susquehanna River near Williamsport, a few miles northwest of the anthracite region. The company's purpose was to make room for the erection of oil storage tanks. Bulldozers practically obliterated a popular Indian site, which for many years had been a source of stone implements.

The bulldozers took off about four feet of soil and thereby exposed the floor of that prehistoric Indian village. This proved a challenge to members of the North Central Branch of the Society for Pennsylvania Archaeology who recovered many arrowheads, spearheads, net sinkers, knives, and similar Indian artifacts.

One of the members, James P. Bressler of Williamsport, found two paint stones amid the debris. Being a former hard-coal mine-worker from Hegins Valley, he recognized one of the nuggets as being anthracite. A unique discovery! It is a polyhedron with at least a dozen facets, the longest about three-quarters of an inch. The facets were made by rubbing this coal on a stone for the purpose of obtaining coal dust which, in turn, was made into paint.

Bressler and his fellow amateur archaeologists have identified the period in Indian culture from which the coal object came. "We are assigning it to the Late Archaic Period," writes Bressler. "Our most intelligent guess for this fishing village [source of the anthracite nugget] would . . . run from 3000 to 2000 B.C."²

George Henry Loskiel, historian of the Moravian mission among the Indians, writes: "The Indians value a species of black stone, soft

and easily cut, as the best for making tobacco pipe heads." This is believed to be a reference to anthracite found only a few miles from the Moravian mission station at Gnadenhütten (Tents of Grace) at what is now Lehighton.³

Loskiel tells of the visit in 1748 of several Moravian missionaries to a destroyed Indian village where many Indian converts to Christianity had become "lost sheep." The Moravian Brethren exhorted these backsliders to confess and "crave the Lord's mercy and pardon." In response, an Indian penitent said:

If a coal is taken from the fire, it loses its heat, and is extinguished. Thus also my heart has lost its fervor, having strayed from the fellowship of the believers.⁴

From this, it may be concluded that the Indians were aware of the presence of coal in their midst and, furthermore, that they had had some experience in burning it. Yet they did not value it, according to Loskiel, because wood was too plentiful and could be obtained too easily.⁵

Having penetrated the Indian country (of which the anthracite region was a part) at an early date, Moravian missionaries were among the first white men to observe outcroppings of anthracite. From their headquarters in Bethlehem, they rode horseback or trudged on Indian trails through rugged forests to visit their mission outposts or Indian settlements, especially those along the North Branch of the Susquehanna River. Count Ludwig Zinzendorf, their leader, accompanied by Conrad Weiser, visited the Wyoming Valley in 1742.⁶

Twenty years later, advance agents of the Susquehanna Company, surveying a section of the valley, reported finding coal outcroppings on the right bank of Mill Creek near the Susquehanna River just beyond the northern limits of Wilkes-Barre. The next year, meeting at Windham, Connecticut, the company voted to reserve to itself any coal found in its future towns.⁷

William Scull's map of Pennsylvania, published April 4, 1770, indicates coal in several places in the vicinity of Pottsville.⁸

These anterior dates are significant in the history of the anthracite industry. Yet they represent only scattered events lacking in continuity. On the other hand, Ginder's accidental discovery marked the beginning of a train of events that led directly to the founding of the industry. By being at the right place at the right time, he gave impulse to *organized* effort.

Even if this were not a fact, he would still remain the anthracite industry's outstanding folk hero, because his position in American folklore depends less on history than on popular tradition woven by the people. The legend surrounding his name crystallized long ago and his place on Olympus is securely fixed. There is nothing we can do about it except to understand.⁹

To contribute to this understanding, I will present Philip Ginder, man and legend, and show what we know of him from oral and written sources, revealing for the first time the true motivation behind his epochal discovery in 1791.

THE TRUE PHILIP GINDER

Some American folk heroes—Paul Bunyan, for example—exist only in the imagination; but Philip Ginder was made of flesh and blood. He once trod this earth. Much of his life was spent in the north-eastern part of Pennsylvania—virtually the only place in the Western Hemisphere where anthracite is found in commercial quantities.

Like so many other eighteenth-century German settlers of the Keystone State, Ginder had emigrated from the Palatinate region of Germany. Sailing by way of Holland and England, he arrived at Philadelphia on the ship *Neptune*, and took the oath of allegiance to the Provincial Government on October 25, 1746.¹⁰

Philip Ginder was living in Northampton County when he discovered anthracite in 1791. I have found no record of his residence there prior to 1786. In that year the tax list records his paying a tax on one hundred acres of land in Penn Township, Northampton County.¹¹ Assuming that he settled in 1786, the question arises, from where did he come? It is now difficult to say precisely, but from my own exhaustive search of original documents, I believe that Berks County was his earlier place of residence.¹²

By the time of his immigration into the New World, the best farmlands located south of the Blue Mountain had already been claimed by German and Swiss immigrants who had been pouring into Pennsylvania for more than half a century. After 1750, newcomers like himself could still take up land across the mountain in the "New Purchase," Berks County's frontier, acquired from the Indians by the Pennsylvania Proprietors under a deed dated August

22, 1749. Many of these later immigrants would stake out a claim with a few axe marks on trees indicating the boundaries of their tracts. This preliminary was taken advantage of by many of the eighteenth-century immigrants while they awaited the issuance of warrants of survey from the land office in Philadelphia.¹³

This process involved dangerous living. The "over-the-mountain" settlers were exposed to the danger of Indian attacks. Yet by 1754 there were fifty-one families in the new territory along the Schuylkill River, and another twenty-eight families scattered along the Swatara Creek, according to the original Berks County tax lists.¹⁴ And the over-the-mountain tax list of 1754 includes the name of Philip Kinder.¹⁵

This raises a question about the spelling of German names. Early documents show such variations of the Ginder name as these: Ginter, Kinder, Gintner, Gunder, Gintor, Genter, Guinther, Ginther, and Guinter. The form most frequently encountered in print about the coal discoverer is "Ginter." Parenthetically, in the eighteenth century there were no fixed standards for spelling proper names in Pennsylvania. Numerous German families would spell their names differently on different occasions; within a single family there might be two or three variations.¹⁶

Misspellings proved a serious handicap to accuracy in the compilation of lists of German victims of Indian atrocities during the French and Indian War. The lists were necessarily put together in a hurry under pressure of time and often depended on secondhand information. The immigrants' lack of knowledge of the geography of the over-the-mountain frontier was another factor contributing to confusion. So was a tendency to have the same Indian crimes reported by different individuals to different authorities.

Duplication is obvious in the reports of the "Philip Culmore" and "Philip Guinter" tragedies found in the Conrad Weiser papers. The Culmore murder is the subject of a letter from Captain Jacob Morgan, commander of Fort Lebanon, to Governor William Denny on November 4, 1756. Morgan had obtained his information from soldiers who, on the previous day, had reported following tracks to the Culmore home and finding that Philip Culmore's wife, a daughter and son-in-law, Martin Fell, had just been murdered and scalped by Indians, and that three others from the family had been taken captive.

More than a year later—on November 28, 1757—the same number and type of Indian crimes are associated with the family of Philip

Guinte. The report of this appears on a casualty list compiled by Peter Spycker of Tulpehocken at the request of Conrad Weiser. Included in the list is the following notation: "Philip Guinte's wife, son-in-law and a daughter are killed and scalped. And a daughter and 2 children taken [into] captivity in Oct'r. 1756 over the mountain."

Several facts suggest that "Guinte" is the more accurate name of the unfortunate family. In the first place, though the dates are only a few days apart, the name "Culmore" does not appear on the Spycker list at all. Mispronunciation of the family name was easy under the circumstances as all parties were under stress so soon after the tragic occurrence, and it does not appear that the name was written down by any of the soldiers. Spycker, on the other hand, had a whole year from the time of the Indian attacks to the time of the compilation of his list to correct names and other errors. Of all the lists found in the Weiser papers, the one compiled by Spycker struck me as being the most legible, accurate, and authoritative.¹⁷

Regarding these two reports, Claude W. Unger, Schuylkill County historian, has the following to say: "One cannot avoid the strong suspicion that the Culmore and Guinte accounts relate to the one and the same occasion. Martin Fell appears on the Windsor Township, Berks County, tax list in 1754, so he was real enough. Philip Kinder gets on the over-the-mountain tax list in 1754, so that he also was in existence at this time. *Can this be the Philip Ginter who afterwards lived in the Mahoning region and first discovered coal at Summit Hill?*"¹⁸

The same question is asked of Unger by Dr. George Wheeler, Philadelphia educator and historian, under date of March 1, 1938:

You are familiar, of course, with the Philip Ginter story about the discovery of coal. Do you suppose that this had anything to do with Philip Kinder on the 1754 tax list for the Schuylkill area above the mountain? He seems to have lived near the reported spot where anthracite was discovered in the Lehigh Region.¹⁹

These Unger and Wheeler queries are provocative. Philip Ginter's wife, Magdalena, whose name appears on several Northampton County deeds, must have been much younger than her husband. On at least one deed where she is a cosigner, she swears to "being of full age."²⁰ This may have been a mere legal formality. On the other hand, it may have special significance. Philip I and Magdalena had two sons, Jacob and Philip II. Jacob, the elder son, was born in 1785. To appear on the *Neptune's* passenger list, Ginter had to be at least

sixteen years of age, and he was probably older. Assuming that he was the minimum—sixteen years—in 1746, the year of his arrival in the United States, then at the time of Jacob's birth he must have been fifty-five years old—an advanced age for that era. It was unusual for a man to wait until he was old before marrying for the first time.

The inescapable conclusion, therefore, is that Philip Ginder was a widower when he married Magdalena, daughter of Philip Daubenspeck, a Revolutionary War hero.²¹ He probably was the same man as "Philip Kinder" who appears on the 1754 over-the-mountain tax list, and the "Philip Guinter" whose family was all but wiped out by Indian murder and captivity in October, 1756. Philip's late marriage may also explain why the couple had only two children, which was contrary to the frontier custom of bringing up large families. Their son, Jacob, for instance, fathered eleven children after his marriage.

As a matter of fact, Magdalena *was* much younger than her husband. The second federal census in 1800 proves it. There she is accounted for in the "16 - under - 26" column, while her husband is listed as "45 and up." Their two sons, Jacob and Philip II, are identified as "10 under 16."²²

Carbon County and West Penn Township, Schuylkill County, today constitute the territory that made up Philip Ginder's small world at the time of his accidental discovery of anthracite. It was wild, mountainous country then, and even more forbidding in the middle of the eighteenth century when it bore an appropriate Indian name, *Towamensing* (literally, a wilderness). On its eastern side, the pine-capped Sharp (or Mauch Chunk) Mountain rose precipitously from the Lehigh River. Southwestwardly lay the Mahoning Valley containing almost the only arable land in the district. The Blue Mountain formed the Mahoning Valley's southern boundary. Beyond the Blue Mountain was a succession of ridges, known by various local names, forming deep and narrow valleys, through which murmuring creeks flowed into the Lehigh River. Beyond these ridges rose the Broad Mountain.²³

The first people to plant an outpost of civilization in the midst of this wilderness were Moravian missionaries from Bethlehem. Along the Lehigh River, near the present site of Lehighton, in 1746, they laid out a mission village for Indians whom they had converted to Christianity, and they called it Gnadenhütten. The next year they completed a road from Bethlehem to Gnadenhütten. It was the first road

through this wilderness. About half a century later, it was made part of the Easton-Berwick Turnpike.

In 1754, when Gnadenhütten's population had grown to about five hundred souls, the mission village was moved across the Lehigh to a new site (now occupied by Weissport) and this settlement was named "New Gnadenhütten." About one year later—on November 24, 1755—hostile Indians with tomahawks and fire attacked the settlement and burned it to the ground, murdering eleven persons and injuring many more; they also laid waste the original Gnadenhütten. Survivors fled to Bethlehem by the new road.²⁴

Several years went by before Towamensing was considered safe again for settlement. Some hardy souls returned to take up land, but their number was few. In 1762 the entire district of Towamensing had only thirty-three taxpayers.²⁵ It maintained its original boundaries until 1768, when it was cut up into two large townships—Towamensing and Penn. The territory remained thus divided until 1808, when three townships were created out of the two—East Penn, West Penn, and Lausanne.

East Penn took in the present Mahoning Township and much of Mauch Chunk. West Penn was that part of the territory that was annexed by Schuylkill County when it was created in 1811. Lausanne took over the northern part of the original Penn Township and a piece of Mauch Chunk.

The region's original white settlers were English-speaking people who had received land grants around 1750. Some of them may have been Loyalists since they left for Canada after the War of Independence. Their vacated lands were taken up by new settlers, some English, but mostly German in origin, who had come from the direction of Berks County, including the over-the-mountain part of it identified with the New Purchase. First they settled in Penn Township. Then they spread eastward toward the Mahoning Valley and other places, wherever they could gratify their hunger for good farming land and water sources, penetrating those parts of Northampton County that today are included in Carbon County and one township in Schuylkill County.²⁶

It requires no stretch of the imagination to say that Philip Ginder was part of this migration, for the *Pennsylvania Archives* preserve a record of his land warrants, surveys, and patents in Penn Township; and, as we have already seen, the 1800 census reports his living there.

A distinguished settler, a neighbor of Philip Ginder who plays a key role in his story, was Colonel Jacob Weiss. A native of Philadelphia, Colonel Weiss was deputy quartermaster general in the patriot forces during the Revolutionary War. About a year after his retirement from the army, Colonel Weiss purchased from the Moravian Church about seven hundred acres of timberland north of the Blue Mountain on the Lehigh River; this tract included part of the New Gnadenhütten destroyed by Indians, and Fort Allen built by Benjamin Franklin, which is now occupied by Weissport. In 1785 he brought his wife and two young sons, Francis and Thomas, from Philadelphia to this outpost. Mrs. Weiss was not too happy about the move, but she became adjusted to frontier life and spent the rest of her days there.

Colonel Weiss was an energetic, resourceful, and capable businessman who won the respect of his neighbors in that pioneer community by the manner in which he developed his enterprises. He owned a farm, a thriving lumber business that included logging, sawing timber, and rafting it to various points along the Lehigh River, and a general store. His account book, in possession of the Lehigh County Historical Society, Allentown, shows that in 1784 he sold veal, venison, beef, mutton, and butter, and in 1784 and 1785 he bought quantities of wine, brandy, rum, and molasses, as well as staples like sugar, tea, coffee, and chocolate.²⁷

Philip Ginder was a worthy neighbor of Colonel Weiss's. By 1791, with characteristic Pennsylvania German thrift and industry, he had accumulated enough money to go into milling to meet a growing need in the Mahoning Valley. Millers in those pioneer days generally built their own gristmills, and Ginder was no exception; it was not until the nineteenth century that carpenters and joiners specialized as millwrights. Ginder taught carpentry and millstone grinding to his elder son, Jacob, who in turn taught these trades to his son, Philip III.²⁸

Philip Ginder's gristmill was run by water power day and night. Flour and meal were ground between two large, round millstones, one on top of the other. The ponderous water wheel turned the upper millstone, termed a "runner," while the lower one remained fixed; the meal, fed from a middle hopper, was thus ground between them. Millstone surfaces were grooved into different dresses or patterns to produce various consistencies of flour.

As a carpenter, Philip knew about the different woods, and as a millwright he also knew what kind of rock made the best millstones. The special stone he favored was conglomerate, consisting of white quartz pebbles of various sizes embedded in a siliceous cement, resembling the "millstone grit" of the English coal measures. Unlike red shale and sandstone with which it was often interstratified, conglomerate withstood decomposition. Light in color, hard, firm, and indestructible, it was indeed a rock of the ages. The base of all anthracite beds, conglomerate is found throughout the hard-coal region. Boulders of it in different sizes and shapes lay on the summit of Sharp Mountain overlooking the Panther Valley. Some were exposed to light, others were covered with moss and wild growth, giving the forest a rugged, wildly romantic, appearance.

One day in 1791, Philip Ginder, an axe slung across his shoulder, clambered up the mountainside to a point near the summit in search of rounded conglomerate rock for his millstones. As will be proved later in this chapter, it was rock, and not game, that was the object of his visit. Fatigued after tearing his way through thickets and bushes, Philip rested against a boulder that seemed suitable for his purposes—rested, and contemplated the deep silence around him.

Rolling the rock over for a better examination, he was surprised to find that it exposed a black surface underneath. He held a lump of coal up to the light streaking through the big timber. "As he [Ginder] had often listened to the traditions of the country of the existence of coal in the vicinity," writes an early historian, "it occurred to him that this might be a portion of the 'stone coal' of which he had heard."²⁹

To satisfy his curiosity regarding the stone coal, he carried some to his friend, Joe Neyer, a Mahoning Valley blacksmith, for testing.³⁰ Neyer threw several lumps on his charcoal fire in the hearth to see what would happen. For what appeared an interminable length of time nothing happened. The stones just did not ignite. But their patience was finally rewarded. The stones ignited slowly and a glow finally appeared. Then Joe and Philip grinned with satisfaction. "I guess it's coal all right," said Joe in the Dutch dialect.

Philip Ginder's accidental discovery on the mountain, followed by a successful experiment in Joe Neyer's smithy, quickly became a sensation. The news was spread by word of mouth—the only means of communication in those primitive days—and mostly in the Dutch dialect.

Steeped in Biblical mysticism, the farmer folk invested this dramatic incident with a divine purpose. Didn't the Bible mention coal?—"As coals are to burning coals and wood to fire, so is a contentious man to kindle strife" (Proverbs 26:21); "There shall not be coal to warm at" (Isaiah 47:14); and, "Their visage is blacker than a coal" (Lamentations 4:8). What these German settlers did not know was that the coal referred to in the Scriptures was not mineral. It was charcoal made out of hardwood and used in Biblical times for smelting copper, brass, iron, gold, and silver.³¹ This was academic as far as the settlers were concerned, for they took their Bible literally.

Philip Ginder, happy because Joe Neyer could burn the stone coal he had discovered on the mountain, carried several lumps to Colonel Jacob Weiss. As a Moravian, Colonel Weiss must have heard about anthracite and may even have seen it, so he was not too surprised when he saw what Philip had brought him. He offered to take the specimens to Philadelphia where expert opinion was available as to the value of the coal as a mineral and its commercial potential. Ginder agreed, and the next day the doughty colonel filled his saddlebags with the coal and off he rode on horseback to the city of his birth.

Among the prominent Philadelphians consulted on this trip were Michael Hillegas and Charles Cist. Weiss and Hillegas were first cousins,³² and Weiss and Cist were brothers-in-law,³³ and all were Moravians. Hillegas, a leading merchant, had served as the first Treasurer of the United States. Cist, a prominent printer, had been trained as a physician at the University of Halle in Germany and had served as a Russian Army surgeon in Siberia by appointment of Catherine the Great. He had come to Philadelphia in 1770.

Hillegas, Cist, Weiss, John Nicholson, and several other interested persons obtained the most authoritative scientific counsel then available in Philadelphia, and, on the basis of what they had heard, agreed to form a company to attempt to mine and sell the stone coal from the place where Ginder had discovered it.

Colonel Weiss was authorized to pay Ginder for showing him the precise site of his discovery, but the farmer-miller spurned a financial reward. He did ask a small favor in return for taking Weiss to the place: assistance in expediting through the Land Patent Office, then in Philadelphia, a tract of 308 acres adjoining his own property in Penn Township, Northampton County. The colonel agreed.³⁴

Meanwhile, Weiss had lost no time taking up 770 acres of coal-

bearing land on the mountain, including the exact site of Ginder's discovery. The Lehigh Coal Mine Company, the first of its kind in America, was organized in February, 1792.³⁵ Later, the firm, still operating without a charter, acquired an additional ten thousand acres of coal lands stretching across the Panther Valley from Mauch Chunk³⁶ to Tamaqua.³⁷

Of the original fifty shares, Colonel Weiss retained ten shares for himself as payment for the 770 acres he had transferred to the company. The remaining forty shares were put up for public sale at two hundred dollars a share. Of the twenty-six men who purchased one or more shares, seven were Moravians holding a total of twenty shares.³⁸

Colonel Weiss does not appear to have been in a hurry to carry out his side of the bargain with Philip Ginder. It took six years for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania land patent on 308 acres to be delivered to Ginder—six years after Weiss had promised to expedite it.

By the time the patent finally arrived in 1797, Ginder seems to have lost his enthusiasm for it. He was then too old for timber clearing and for breaking in virgin soil, even with the assistance of his two stalwart young sons, Jacob and Philip II. He held the property only about fifteen months before selling it to Adam Miller of Lynn Township, Northampton County, for 150 pounds in gold and silver. The deed stipulated that Ginder was to have access to the tract's stream for his gristmill whenever his own water supply ran low.³⁹

As a miller, Ginder had stature in the Mahoning Valley farming community beyond any prestige that may have accrued to him as the discoverer of anthracite. In those post-Revolutionary days, millers were prominent men in their neighborhoods, and Philip was no exception. According to local custom, he exacted part of the grain he milled as payment for his services, and this put him in a position to control the market price; however, there is no evidence that he took advantage of his neighbors.

That he was held in high esteem is indicated by his election as a church trustee. About 1790, Mahoning Valley's Zion Church was built of logs and used as a union church. Two congregations, Lutheran and Reformed, owned this church jointly and each held its services in it every other Sunday.⁴⁰ Ginder was one of the two cosigners for the Reformed congregation on a deed⁴¹ by which Abraham Freyman and his wife conveyed an acre of their land to both

congregations for a school site. The Freymans committed themselves as "willing to promote literature and the education of the youth and the extension of the gospel." A German-language parochial school was built there.

A noteworthy honor came to Philip Ginder in 1805 when he was a very old man. In that year the Lehigh and Susquehanna Turnpike Company reported completion of its toll road connecting the two rivers, and requested Governor Thomas McKean to appoint commissioners to "view and examine" it. Philip Ginder was appointed one of the three commissioners. Today such an appointment might be considered of little importance, but then it was recognition of the highest order—first, because it came from the Governor of the Commonwealth, and secondly, because of the importance of the road to the development of the region north of the Blue Mountain. After their inspection, Ginder and his fellow commissioners signed the viewers' certificate⁴² attesting that the turnpike was "executed in a complete and workmanlike manner according to the true intent and meaning" of the enabling act.

The old Lehigh and Susquehanna Turnpike came up from Mauch Chunk, crossed the Broad Mountain between Nesquehoning and Mauch Chunk, passed through the main streets of Beaver Meadow, Hazleton, and Conyngham and ended at Nescopeck, across the Susquehanna River from Berwick; it was often referred to as the "Berwick Turnpike." Parts of it were later merged into Route 29 from Hazleton via Mauch Chunk and Lehighton to Allentown. This was formerly Route 309 before it was changed to reach from Allentown farther west through Tamaqua.

The Lehigh and Susquehanna Turnpike was one of the most important internal improvements of its day. It opened up the Wyoming Valley (Wilkes-Barre) to commerce with Philadelphia and the Lehigh Valley and promoted lumbering and mining as well. It hastened the settlement of Northampton County Germans in lower Luzerne County around Hazleton. Taverns, generally kept by Germans, provided "entertainment for man and beasts" at frequent intervals along the road. One of the best remembered is the Landing Tavern, a cheerful dot of civilization in the wilderness at the first gate or turnpike of the road at Lausanne on the Lehigh. Abram Klotz⁴³ kept the Landing. He endeared himself to his guests, mostly passengers and drivers of four-horse stagecoaches, with his warm hospitality, good food and drinks, and story telling. Another station along the turnpike was

Jacob Drumheller's tavern, which was the first house erected within the present limits of Hazleton.

The Lehigh and Susquehanna Turnpike and its wayside taverns had other significance in that they provided the means by which the Philip Ginder story, preserved in the Pennsylvania Dutch dialect, might be spread orally beyond the Mahoning Valley. It was a wonderful yarn to tell before a roaring fire in the public room of a tavern.

Some time after Ginder's official inspection of the Lehigh and Susquehanna Turnpike, a man unknown to history turned up and ordered him off the property, saying, in effect, that it belonged to him by right of a prior survey. While flaws in land titles were not uncommon in pioneer days (Isn't that the reason for the Lincolns leaving Kentucky?), it appears incredible that Ginder could have cultivated his farm and operated his gristmill for so many years without a valid land patent.

Doesn't this suggest villainy? If so, who was the villain? We do not know, but popular tradition holds that when Ginder was dispossessed he became despondent and wandered off, presumably in the direction of Berwick, to achieve the final glory of folk heroes—a mysterious death.⁴⁴

THE LEGENDARY GINDER

On April 19, 1826, a venerable Quaker physician, Dr. Thomas C. James, read a paper, "A Brief Account of the Discovery of Anthracite Coal on the Lehigh," before the Council of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. It aroused so much interest that it was published in the official *Memoirs*.⁴⁵

Following is an extract:

As the brief account of the discovery of the Anthracite Coal on the summit of the Mauch Chunk Mountain seemed to engage the attention of some of the members of the Historical Society on one of the evenings of the meeting of their council, and as it has been thought worthy of preservation, the writer of the following little narrative feels no objection to commit it, notwithstanding its imperfection, to paper, although the circumstances detailed occurred at such a distance of time as must plead an excuse for imperfect recollection.

It was some time in the autumn of 1804 that the writer and a

friend [Anthony Morris, Esq.] started on an excursion to visit some small tracts of land that were joint property on the river Lehigh in Northampton County. We went by the way of Allentown, and, after having crossed the Blue Mountain, found ourselves in the evening unexpectedly bewildered in a secluded part of Mahoning Valley, at a distance as we feared, from any habitation; as the road became more narrow, and showed fewer marks of having been used, winding among scrubby timber and underwood. Being pretty well convinced that we had missed our way, but, as is usual with those who are wrong, unwilling to retrace our steps, we nevertheless checked our horses about sun-setting, to consider what might be the most eligible course.

At this precise period, we happily saw emerging from the woods no airy sprite, but, what was much more to our purpose, a good substantial German-looking woman, leading a cow laden with a bag of meal, by a rope halter. Considering this as a probable indication of our being in the neighborhood of a mill, we ventured to address our inquiries to the dame, who in a language curiously compounded of what might be called high and low Dutch, with a spice of English, made us ultimately comprehend that we were not much above a mile distant from Philip Ginter's mill, and as there was but one road before us, we could not really miss our way.

We accordingly proceeded, and soon reached the desired spot, where we met with a hospitable reception, but received the uncomfortable intelligence that we were considerably out of our intended course, and should be obliged to traverse a mountainous district, seldom trodden by the traveller's foot, to reach our destined port on the Lehigh, then known by the name of the *Landing*, but since dignified with the more classical appellation of Lausanne.

We were kindly furnished by our host with lodgings in the mill, which was kept going all night; and as the structure was not of the most firm and compact character, we might almost literally be said to have been rocked to sleep. However, after having been refreshed with a night's rest, such as it was, and taking breakfast with our hospitable landlord, we started on the journey of the day, preceded by *Philip*, with his axe on his shoulder, an implement necessary to remove the obstructing saplings that might impede the passage of our horses, if not ourselves; and these we were under the necessity of dismounting and leading through the bushes and briars of the grownup pathway, if pathway had ever really existed.

In the course of our pilgrimage we reached the summit of the Mauch-Chunk Mountain, the present site of the mine or rather quarry of Anthracite Coal; at that time there were only to be seen three or four small pits, which had much the appearance of the commencement of rude wells, into one of which our guide descended with great ease, and threw up some pieces of coal for our examination; after which, whilst we lingered on the spot, contemplating the wildness of the scene, honest Philip amused us with the following

narrative of the original discovery of this most valuable of minerals, now promising, from its general diffusion, so much of wealth and comfort to a great portion of Pennsylvania.

He said, when he first took up his residence in that district of country, he built for himself a rough cabin in the forest, and supported his family by the proceeds of his rifle, being literally a hunter of the backwoods. The game he shot, including bear and deer, he carried to the nearest store, and exchanged for the other necessities of life. But, at the particular time to which he then alluded, he was without a supply of food for his family, and after being out all day with his gun in quest of it, he was returning towards evening over the Mauch-Chunk mountain, entirely unsuccessful and dispirited, having shot nothing; a drizzling rain beginning to fall, and the dusky night approaching, he bent his course homeward, considering himself as one of the most forsaken of human beings. As he trod slowly over the ground, his foot stumbled against something which, by the stroke, was driven before him; observing it to be black, to distinguish which there was just light enough remaining, he took it up, and as he had often listened to the traditions of the country of the existence of coal in the vicinity, it occurred to him that this perhaps might be a portion of that "stone-coal" of which he had heard.

He accordingly carefully took it with him to his cabin and the next day carried it to Col. Jacob Weiss, residing at what was then known by the name of Fort Allen. The Colonel, who was alive to the subject, brought the specimen with him to Philadelphia, and submitted it to the inspection of John Nicholson and Michael Hillegas, Esqs., and Charles Cist, an intelligent printer, who ascertained its nature and qualities, and authorized the Colonel to satisfy Ginter for his discovery, upon his pointing out the precise spot where he found the coal. This was done by acceding to Ginter's proposal of getting through the forms of the patent-office the title for a small tract of land which he supposed had never been taken up, comprising a mill-seat, on which he afterwards built the mill which afforded us the lodging of the preceding night, and which he afterwards was unhappily deprived of by the claim of a prior survey.

Being a conscientious old gentleman, Dr. James quite properly begins his narrative with an explanation: "the writer of the following little narrative feels no objection to commit it, notwithstanding its imperfection, to paper; although the circumstances detailed, occurred at such a distance of time as must plead an excuse for imperfect recollection." The "distance of time" extended twenty-two years—from 1804 when Dr. James had his conversation with Philip Ginter until 1826 when he finally wrote down what he remembered of that con-

version. Whatever the errors in Dr. James's narrative, they are the result not of observation but of faulty memory—"imperfect recollection," to use the physician's own phrase.

The most serious flaw in his recollection unfortunately affects the very heart of his narrative, in which he represents Ginder as a desperately poor hunter when he made his epochal discovery on Sharp Mountain in 1791. "He was without a supply of food for his family," we are told, "and after being out all day with his gun in quest of it, he was returning towards evening over the Mauch Chunk Mountain,⁴⁶ entirely unsuccessful and dispirited, having shot nothing . . . considering himself as one of the most forsaken of human beings."

With the benefit of more than a century and a quarter of hindsight, this is hard to believe of Philip Ginder. In his early years as a settler, the eastern Pennsylvania wilderness teemed with wild game—panthers, beavers, bears, wolves, foxes, catamounts, deer, and birds. If Ginder's family had really depended on his skill as a hunter for its food, as implied by the narrator, then sheer determination would have kept him outdoors until he could bring home at least one animal. This would not have been difficult where wild game was so abundant.

It was customary for immigrant Germans in eighteenth-century Pennsylvania to hunt for food and skins to tide them over until the first crop had come up, but this did not make professional hunters of them. They might do a little shooting for years after their arrival in the state and still not lose their amateur standing.

Regarding the industry of those early German settlers, Governor George Thomas (1738–1746) had the following to say in a message to the Pennsylvania Provincial Assembly: "This Province has been for some time the asylum of the distressed Protestants of the Palatinate, and other parts of Germany; and I believe it may with truth be said that the present flourishing condition of it is in great measure owing to the industry of those people."⁴⁷

In the light of his record, Ginder was no less industrious and ambitious than his fellow Germans. In *Minstrels of the Mine Patch*, I make the following point:

In 1791, the year of the coal discovery, Ginder had been living in Pennsylvania, and probably in this particular corner of it, for forty-five years. Unless he was far less industrious and frugal than the other German settlers, which seems improbable, he would be expected to have taken up some of the vast tracts of unclaimed land then available. *Pennsylvania Archives* record the fact that in

1786—five years before the discovery—Ginder was in possession of three hundred acres of land in Penn Township, Northampton County. While this in itself may not be conclusive proof that he was a farmer, the archives show further that in the same year he was taxed with one hundred acres, which must have been under cultivation.⁴⁸

The *Pennsylvania Archives*, Third Series, reveal several other Philip Ginder properties in Penn Township, Northampton County, in 1786 and 1789—⁴⁹ all prior to the year of his discovery of coal. He was hardly “a hunter of the backwoods,” with a thin line dividing him and his family from starvation. Then why did Dr. James represent him thus? Again, we can only attribute it to his fading memory—his “imperfect recollection.” Ginder might have told him that when he first came to Pennsylvania he had to support himself by hunting and had had a hard time of it. This must have impressed itself on Dr. James’s mind. Twenty-two years later, when he was writing his reminiscences, he unconsciously telescoped the hunting incident from the late 1740’s to 1791, the year of the discovery atop Sharp Mountain. Certainly the bit about returning home empty-handed to a starving family after he had made a discovery of anthracite potentially worth a vast fortune greatly enhances the dramatic value of the incident.

Dr. James’s paper must have elicited many compliments from those who heard it in the Council of The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, and even more from readers after its publication in the Society’s *Memoirs*.

Early in 1829 *The Register of Pennsylvania*, edited by Samuel Hazard, reprinted the Dr. James narrative from the society’s *Memoirs*, thereby launching the legend of Philip Ginder. Hazard’s *Register*, published in Philadelphia, had a state-wide circulation, so the Dr. James narrative reached a fairly large audience by that single publication. The *Register* was responsible, however, for a much greater audience since its article was copied by many newspapers and magazines of the period.⁵⁰

One of the newspapers to pick up the tale was the Pottsville *Miners’ Journal*, then the most influential newspaper in the anthracite region. It spread the entire story on the front page of its May 23, 1829, issue under the one-column heading, “History of the Discovery and Use of Anthracite Coal.” This, in turn, was copied by other newspapers. The Dr. James version even appeared in the German-language press: the *Stimme des Volks* (Voice of the People), published in Orwigsburg,

Schuylkill County, carried the account in its November 12, 1833, issue attributing it to the *Friedensbothe*, then published in Allentown. Printed and reprinted in newspapers and magazines, in both English and German, the Philip Ginder legend became familiar to a large number of people; and it continues to be reprinted, especially in the anthracite region.

In the 1840's the Ginder legend began its career in state, regional, and local history books, and books of general interest about the anthracite industry. Among the first ones to publish the legend was Bowen's *The Coal Regions of Pennsylvania*. The Ginder legend was "doubtless already familiar to many," observed Bowen. The legend was "so curious and romantic itself, and is fraught with such miraculous results upon the physical and mental condition of mankind, that we could scarcely excuse ourself were we to omit it here."⁵¹

This was the line followed for more than a century by virtually all the book authors who carried references to Ginder. The tale had become so popular that no author writing about coal could afford to omit it lest he be accused of incompleteness.⁵²

The book authors either quoted the full Dr. James narrative, as did Ele Bowen, or paraphrased it, or repeated the story in their own words, so that many variations were published. The Dr. James version, however, was universally accepted as the authentic source of the Ginder legend. Amazing is the fact that in more than a century of book publication on the subject, little, if any, original research has been done on it. Most authors simply copied from one another, even to perpetuating the misspelling of the folk hero's surname, giving it as "Ginter," with a "t," as Dr. James did originally.⁵³

The newspapers, magazines, and books undoubtedly stimulated the oral circulation of the Philip Ginder legend on the theory that what was read was later talked about. This was particularly true in the nineteenth century when so many people, including miners, depended on the spoken word for information.

The Ginder legend, however, enjoyed an oral circulation that was wholly independent of printer's ink. In the first quarter of this century, it was spread all over the country by tourists who had come to Summit Hill to view the "Burning Mine" of world-wide fame. When the great underground fire was discovered, in February, 1859, it was already out of control, having ignited the timbers and eaten its way into the loose coal in one of the breasts. It took eighty-two years, and more than two million dollars, to extinguish this fire.⁵⁴

At the turn of the century, the Burning Mine was still blazing away, causing the owner, the Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company, known locally as the "Old Company," to abandon its Summit Hill mining operations and move down into the Panther Valley. While consuming millions of tons of coal, the great mine fire still left untouched thick benches of anthracite, to retrieve which the Old Company awarded leases to small local contractors, many of them Pennsylvania Dutch.

One of the earliest leases went to the late Frank Adams who tunneled under the fire and thus was able to mine about ten thousand tons of coal a year on which he paid a royalty. The Adams colliery shared honors with the Burning Mine as a tourist attraction.

Frank Adams's son, J. Benson Adams, who is president both of the Summit Hill Trust Company and of The Bank of Lehigh, and a former director of the Lehigh Navigation Coal Company, recalls⁵⁵ that as a young boy he was one of the guides at his father's mine from which the fire could be safely observed. Each year the Lehigh Valley Railroad and the Central Railroad of New Jersey ran Sunday excursions from New York, Philadelphia, and intermediate points to Mauch Chunk, which was widely advertised as "The Switzerland of America." From Mauch Chunk the tourists were conveyed to Summit Hill, nine miles up the mountain, in open cars of the famous Switchback Railroad. Visitors were met at the Switchback's Summit Hill terminal and driven to the Adams mine where Adams's employees—miners and breaker boys—showed them around. This was welcome as a supplementary source of income: the guides not only received tips for their services, but sold souvenirs carved out of anthracite, from which they made a profit.

By a coincidence, the site of Philip Ginder's discovery and the Burning Mine were in the same town, Summit Hill. The tourist guides were told to make the discovery tale part of their spiel to the visitors. The season ran from May to mid-November, so many of the tourists were school teachers. They carried the Ginder legend back to their pupils in various parts of the country.

Russell Davies, inside superintendent of the Newkirk Tunnel Colliery, operated by the Newkirk Mining Company, Incorporated, one mile west of Tamaqua, also remembers serving as a boy tourist guide at Summit Hill. That was in 1907 when he was still a breaker boy at the Spring Tunnel Colliery near the Burning Mine. He told me that he and the other boy guides wore their regular working clothes

and boots. Their coal-smutted little faces were streaked with oil that dripped from the teapot-like open-flame oil lamps hanging from their cloth mining caps. They often grinned just to amuse the tourists, their white teeth glistening in striking contrast to their blackened faces.

"Many of the visitors were educated people, even college professors," recollected Davies. "I recall that we had people from as far away as Chicago, and from down Oklahoma and Arizona, and even Texas. I was curious about where they came from, and I recall these people telling us where they lived. They were very much interested in the story about Ginder and his discovery. Through these tourists the Ginder story was spread throughout the country.

"And I'll say all over the world. I met Chinamen later in life who knew the story of Philip Ginder. In the period between 1942 and 1953 when this Newkirk Tunnel mine belonged to the Philadelphia & Reading [Coal and Iron] Company, we had perhaps a thousand visitors, mostly engineers and mining people, from all over the world who had come to study our methods of mining. Probably as many as forty were Chinese. Like the other visitors, they, too, knew the Philip Ginder story.

"I have just returned from an official visit to Spain, arranged through the United States Government, to try to advise Spanish coal operators about mining methods. This trip of mine followed a visit to this colliery in 1955 by Spanish mining engineers. I was surprised when they knew about Philip Ginder and asked questions about his discovery."⁵⁸

NECHO ALLEN JOINS PHILIP GINDER

Early in the 1930's when I began asking miners in various parts of the anthracite region about Philip Ginder, I discerned a tendency to identify him with details of local discovery legends. This was the case in Schuylkill County where Necho Allen was the folk hero who symbolized the sturdy men who had laid the foundations of the anthracite industry in that county.

The following excerpt from Ella Zerbey Elliott's book, *Old Schuylkill Tales*, is an example of this tendency :

In 1791 Philip Ginther [sic], while hunting, accidentally discovered anthracite coal *would ignite* It was a year prior to this, in 1790, that Necho Allen, a hunter, *camped out for the night under a ledge of rocks in Schuylkill County. He had built a fire and laid down to sleep, awaking to find the rocks all aflame.* . . .

The buying of coal lands in Carbon and Luzerne Counties immediately after the discovery of coal gave Philip Ginther precedence over Necho Allen as the finder of the black diamonds, and history usually credits Ginther with that discovery.

Some authorities, however, state that the discovery of the two hunters was a coincidence or simultaneous in date, and Allen's name is mentioned with Ginther's . . .⁵⁷

In a day when anthracite miners took their unpublished history and folklore much more seriously than does the present generation, the coupling of Necho Allen's name with Philip Ginder's, or vice versa, depending on the neighborhood, might have started a hot debate in a mine-patch barroom. Each discoverer had his group of hero worshippers. The most fanatic lived in the adjacent counties of Schuylkill and Carbon where they could get at each other conveniently should hostilities break out. Now and then a man found himself in enemy territory and he would need courage to express his point of view, as Mrs. Elliott goes on to illustrate:

Old John Weiss [a relative of Colonel Jacob Weiss of Fort Allen] who lived near the site of the Odd Fellows' cemetery, Pottsville, and drove the stage on the old turnpike road from Sunbury to Reading, often told this story [the Ginder legend] and waxed wroth if anyone dared contradict him or assert that Allen had found coal in Schuylkill County prior to that discovered by Ginther . . .

As Mrs. Elliott suggests, the legendary careers of Philip Ginder and Necho Allen parallel each other to a certain point. Both are mistakenly portrayed as hunters when they accidentally discovered anthracite, though in Ginder's case the campfire incident is apocryphal. The hunter motif in the Necho Allen tale was disproved long ago by Schuylkill County historians who found that Necho was a lumberman at the time of the campfire incident. Finally, Allen's death and burial place, like Ginder's, remain a mystery.⁵⁸

Outside of Schuylkill County, hardly anybody had heard of Necho Allen, and even in Schuylkill he was passing into oblivion with the death of the older generation, until 1926 and 1927 when Pottsville had a stock subscription campaign for a new community hotel. As

part of the publicity build-up, people were invited to submit suggestions for a name for the new hotel. Out of more than seven hundred names received, that of Necho Allen, the neglected folk hero, was the one selected.⁵⁹ Intensive newspaper and radio publicity had the effect of reviving public interest in Necho Allen and focusing attention on the most stirring part of his legend—the incident dramatizing his discovery of coal on Broad Mountain.

The late George Luks, famous American artist, was commissioned to capture this legendary incident on a mural painting to be hung in the hotel lobby. A Pennsylvania Dutchman, who in his boyhood had lived in Shenandoah, Schuylkill County, Luks recreated the scene with a magic brush and in vivid colors. In fact, so magnificent was his triumph that viewers could not help but carry away the impression that the scene symbolized the discovery of anthracite for the whole industry. Certainly the face of the kneeling Necho Allen who discovers burning anthracite on the mountain is memorable.⁶⁰

Inevitably, many who were familiar with the Dr. James version of the Philip Ginder legend were enchanted with Necho Allen as a result of the hotel publicity and the George Luks painting. Included among them were the people from Panther Valley, heart of Carbon County's once-great coal mining district, and Ginder's home territory.

Imperceptibly, the Necho Allen campfire incident attached itself to the Ginder legend. And now the grafting seems permanent, even in the Panther Valley. In a special tabloid edition, published on March 9, 1955, the *Lansford Evening Record*, the Panther Valley's leading newspaper, ran a three-column feature story under a five-column headline: "Wandering Hunter Awoke Industrial Giant" that illustrated the merger of the two legends. The *Evening Record's* lead follows:

Panther Valley was a frontier wilderness back in 1791, when a wandering hunter paused in his journey to camp for the night on a wild, wind-swept hill.

Nearby Mahoning Valley had been turned into farmland by a few hardy pioneers who braved the constant threat of Indian raids to work the fertile soil. They didn't bother the neighboring valley with its steep, rocky hills and its dense wilderness. They knew of it only as Panther Valley, named after the most feared of its wild life.

So when Philip Ginter (also known as Ginder) looked down from what is now the neat little borough of Summit Hill, he saw a dense forest, with little Panther Creek bubbling along the valley's

floor. *Legend has it that he lit a campfire for his evening meal, and by some accident a piece of "black rock" was kicked into the fire. As this fragment of a coal vein's outcropping became heated, it began to burn.*

As later events proved, this "burning rock" was to revolutionize this particular section of northeastern Pennsylvania and a mighty industry was to rise in the virgin valley Philip Ginter looked down upon that day . . .

Transplantations in the folklore process can be subtle. The story of Edward Redline, eighty-three years of age when I interviewed him, is a case in point. Having spent most of his life in the Ginter country before moving to Summit Hill in 1949, he should have been able to resist the grafting of the Necho Allen detail on to the Ginter legend. Yet, judging from the following interview, he unwittingly has fallen for the new line:

"How far does your memory go with regard to Philip Ginter?" I asked. "In other words, when did you first hear tell about Philip Ginter discovering coal?"

"My parents used to talk about that, I remember, when I was a kid."

"Do you remember what they said?"

"Well, he was the man that found the first coal on Summit Hill."

"Do you remember them telling you anything about the circumstances as to how he happened to find it?"

"He was doing something, and finally he had this lump of coal and *it happened to get afire, and he found out there was heat in the coal, and I heard them speaking about that.*"⁶¹

Here is how Richard D. Edwards, president and general manager of the Panther Valley's biggest department store (Brights) remembers the Ginter legend:

. . . I remember, as a boy, hearing the story of Philip Ginter.

It was that he was on the mountain, west of Summit Hill, on a hunting expedition, and he built a little fire to keep warm. When he was ready to move, and he wanted to extinguish the fire, he noticed that some of the black rocks were producing heat, and this was the way that anthracite coal was discovered.

He then told of his discovery to several people in this area, one of whom was Colonel Jacob Weiss of Weissport.

My age, at that time, was about 10 years, and I am now 65. I was born in Lansford, and, as a boy, spent many hours gathering chestnuts from trees in the area where Philip Ginter discovered coal.

I do not remember where I first heard this story, but it has been repeated many, many times, down through the years.⁶²

RECOVERY OF LONG-LOST GINDER MOTIF

I first heard of Philip Ginder from the late D. A. L. Davis of Lansford. At the time of our meeting, he had spent his entire seventy-three years in his native Carbon County, nearly fifty as publisher and editor of the *Lansford Leader*, a weekly newspaper. And he was steeped in the mining folklore of the Panther Valley.

Ginder, however, was not the object of my visit when we met one summer Sunday afternoon in 1931 at the Summit Hill terminal of the Switchback, famous sightseeing train that had brought me from Mauch Chunk. I had come to request information about an entirely different legend—that of the reappearing hand imprint of a “Molly Maguire” on a cell wall in the Carbon County prison at Mauch Chunk. The popular tradition was that the imprint had been left originally by a “Molly” prisoner protesting his innocence just before he was hanged in the prison corridor. Davis identified the prisoner for me and gave me much information about the terroristic organization from firsthand knowledge.

Toward the end of our conversation, he nonchalantly introduced the name of Philip Ginder, asking whether I had heard the legend surrounding his name. My answer was, of course, in the negative. My interest stirred, from that moment on I made Ginder part of my folklore research. I remember consulting the late Claude W. Unger of Pottsville about him. He knew the legend all right, but could throw no light on the personal life of the coal discoverer. I got similar responses from elderly miners. I do not recall a single informant who could tell me anything tangible about the real Philip Ginder. At one point in my research, I was ready to believe that Philip Ginder was a myth sprung from the miners’ collective imagination. That still would have qualified him as a folk hero, but I was driven by an insatiable curiosity to unearth the real Philip Ginder—if, indeed, he had ever existed.

In the course of my gropings during the early thirties, I learned of descendants seeking the same information as I was, so I communicated with them. One was the late Reverend William F. Ginder,

a great-grandson from St. Petersburg, Pennsylvania. Unofficial historian of the Ginder family, he it was who had located his ancestor's signature on a list of those German passengers from the SS *Neptune* who had taken the oath of allegiance to the Provincial Government at the Philadelphia courthouse on October 25, 1746. That made Philip Ginder real enough.

About the same time, I became acquainted with David P. Ginder, another great-grandson, who, past seventy, was then the oldest living descendant. Ginder, stationmaster at Lehighton for the Central Railroad of New Jersey, was engaged in a search for his ancestor's last resting place to mark it with a suitable memorial stone. In this quest I joined him one Sunday. We found the grave of the folk hero's son, Jacob, in the little cemetery of Ben Salem Church near Ashfield, Carbon County. Philip Ginder III is buried in a cemetery at Rockport in the same county. We found no trace of the family's progenitor.

In *Minstrels of the Mine Patch* I have two separate articles on the anthracite folk hero. One, entitled "The Philip Ginder Legend," is in Chapter Five: "Superstitions and Legends." The other is in the book's appendix under the heading: "Who Was the Discoverer of Anthracite?" In the latter place, I summarize other early discoveries of anthracite in an attempt to show that Philip Ginder has history, as well as popular support, on his side.

My interest did not slacken with the publication of *Minstrels of the Mine Patch*. I was aware of the inadequacy of the Ginder material published there. Over the years, after much reflection, I had concluded that while secondary material obtainable in Pennsylvania state and local archives, in libraries, and in private attics was essential, a real breakthrough in research could come only from the people, the source of folklore, preservers of tradition. And that is the way it finally worked out—but I must not get ahead of my story.

On the final phase of my research, I had the assistance of Philip M. Ginder, at that time vice-president and general manager of the New Jersey Zinc Company, Palmerton, Carbon County, and his good friend, J. Benson Adams. In all the world, there were no three persons to whom Philip Ginder, the folk hero, meant more than to this informal research team of Ginder, Adams, and Korson.

Ginder and Adams are lifelong residents of Carbon County and they share a keen interest in the Philip Ginder tradition as well as in local history. Ginder, as a great-great-grandson of the folk hero, naturally has a special interest in his ancestor. In 1941 Adams success-

fully directed a week-long Panther Valley celebration of the 150th anniversary of Philip Ginder's discovery of coal. As Summit Hill's leading banker and business counselor, Adams is on intimate terms with most families in the Mahoning Valley where some of the folk hero's descendants and those of his contemporary neighbors still live. His friendships among old families and the confidence he enjoyed in the community were gilt-edged assets to our research.

On August 31, 1956, the three of us met in Summit Hill and rode around observing the countryside that had once known Philip Ginder, the miller, millwright, farmer, and discoverer of anthracite. In the course of the day, we found ourselves in Summit Hill's Borough Park observing the granite monument erected by the community to mark the approximate spot where coal was discovered in 1791. Across the street, just a few yards from us, was a farmer selling vegetables from a truck to a housewife, and Adams recognized him. The farmer, Leon Arner of Strauss Valley, was secretary of old Zion Union [Lutheran and Reformed] Church. When he learned of our quest, the farmer recalled having two parchment deeds at home bearing Philip Ginder's name. You could have knocked us over with something lighter than the proverbial feather when we heard this bit of information. That evening Adams drove to the Leon Arner farmhouse and borrowed the deeds. One of them, dated January 24, 1808, was significant in bringing to light three facts hitherto not established as certainties: (1) that Philip Ginder was a resident of the Mahoning Valley; (2) that he was a trustee of Zion Church as a member of the Reformed congregation; and (3) that he lived to a ripe old age, 1808 being the last year he was known to be still living.

With this evidence in hand, we naturally assumed that Ginder was buried in the cemetery adjoining Zion Church. About a year later—on August 22, 1957—we three, joined by Carl F. Maurer who had driven me from Pottsville, made a headstone-by-headstone examination of the ancient cemetery without finding the coal discoverer's grave.

Another important parchment deed miraculously popped up at the right time. It will be recalled that Ginder received a Commonwealth of Pennsylvania patent, dated March 17, 1797, to a tract of 308 acres in Penn Township, Northampton County. The patent was to have been expedited by Colonel Jacob Weiss in return for Ginder's showing him the spot where he had discovered coal, but it took Weiss six years to get it. The colonel's young son, Francis, a land agent,

makes the following reference to this patent in a letter to his father, dated at Philadelphia, April 19, 1797:

Though you make no mention of P. Ginter's Patent in your letter, I suppose you have received it—and beg you to inform him that it is in your hands—or send it to him—.⁶³

Ginder sold this 308-acre tract to Adam Miller of Lynn Township, Northampton County, on June 9, 1798, reserving certain water rights for his gristmill. Adam Miller, in turn, sold 142 acres of it to Leonhard Miller of Heidelberg Township, same county, on April 25, 1799. From a typewritten copy⁶⁴ we knew that this deed contained many references to Philip Ginder, thereby enhancing the value of the original.

In the summer of 1957, while we were looking for the original deed, a Mahoning Valley farmer, a descendant of the above Millers, walked into Adams's bank to apply for a real estate loan. And among his papers he produced the very deed we were seeking—the one of April 25, 1799!

In 1956 and 1957 there was a three-way exchange of correspondence (photostats and transcripts) and occasional long-distance telephone calls to keep one another in close touch with developments. While I searched records in county courthouses, Pennsylvania state offices in Harrisburg, and in the rooms of historical societies, Ginder and Adams concentrated their research activities in Carbon County, and most intensively in the Mahoning Valley, where all three believed the truth about Philip Ginder might ultimately be uncovered. In his letters, Adams kept reassuring me that he was constantly on the alert, "digging and inquiring . . . and checking into the location of his [Ginder's] lands."

After banking hours, Adams would drive to various farms and talk with elderly people, whom he knew, to obtain leads and fragments of information and folklore. It was my hope that we would find at least one bilingual aged person with a genealogical line running back to Ginder's time who would be able to tell us the coal-discovery tale as it was before it was eclipsed by Dr. James's "poor hunter" motif.

Then came the blessed day! I received a letter from Adams, dated September 25, 1957, in which he told of finding a man who seemed to be the very one we were all looking for. "It was a big evening for me," he wrote.

Excerpts from that Adams letter follow:

. . . I was very much interested in talking to an old gentleman last night who has lived in the valley [Mahoning] for 90 years. He never knew Philip Ginder, but he knew men who had been associated with him and burned the first coal that was brought over the mountain . . . and he [Ginder] trained his son, Jacob, to be an excellent carpenter and millstone grinder. This old gentleman informed me that Philip Ginder was on the Summit Hill mountain to find stones to make millstones when he discovered the coal and that he brought the product back to Strauss Valley where a Mr. Neyer who was a blacksmith and wheelwright burned it on his charcoal forge, and after they were certain of the coal's ability, Philip Ginder took it to Col. Weiss.

He also informed me . . . that several . . . Ginders have come to him in regard to the original Philip. So I am convinced that Philip Ginder was not just an ordinary hunter . . .

I think you should have a recording of this Mr. Breiner's story of the discovery of coal. It was a big evening for me. Mr. Breiner has all of his mental faculties, but physically he is slipping fast . . .

My first impulse after receiving the letter was to fly to the Mahoning Valley—on wings, of course—to interview old Bill Breiner. I saw him on Thursday, October 1, 1957. He was living with his son-in-law and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Harvey L. Snyder, on a farm in East Penn, Carbon County. From birth until the infirmities of advanced age had forced him to move in with the Snyders, his home was in West Penn, Philip Ginder's home township.

In view of his advanced age—he insisted he was “only” eighty-five—and his importance to my project, I added photography to the tape recorder as my research tools. I had a commercial photographer take his picture talking into the microphone. Neither tape recorder nor camera seemed to inhibit him in the least bit. In fact, he put on a Sunday smile for the photographer.

A butcher by trade, but with close family ties to the anthracite industry, Bill Breiner was short, toothless, and alert. His face was angular and well furrowed by time and the elements; his elongated nose seemed to hang over his gray, wispy mustache. Throughout the interview he gripped the arms of his rocking chair as if to steady himself, though otherwise his demeanor was relaxed. Like most Pennsylvania Dutchmen in the Mahoning Valley, he was bilingual. He spoke to me in English with a marked Pennsylvania Dutch accent. His answers to my questions were prompt, clear, and forthright. While his health was poor, his mind was clear and his memory sur-

prisingly tenacious. Now and then he contradicted himself on minor points. When he had no ready answer, he would simply say, "I don't know."

But on the most vital point—the motive for Philip Ginder's presence on the summit of Sharp Mountain the day he discovered anthracite—old Bill Breiner was as firm, solid, and immovable as a boulder of conglomerate rock. To test his memory on this vital point, I kept returning to it, but Old Bill never wavered. It was as if his memory were set in a mold in which was forever inscribed, "Philip Ginder was on Sharp Mountain to pick millstones for his gristmill."

"His trade was millwright," Old Bill explained, "and he was rooting for stones to make grinders to grind grain." When Ginder found the coal under the conglomerate rock, he did not know at first what it was, according to Breiner. "Then he took it to old Joe Neyer, a blacksmith by trade, and they put it on the fire. Then it burned. Then they knew it was coal."

"Did you hear tell how he accidentally discovered coal? Did he fall, or—?"

"No, he was digging these rocks. They had to be just such a kind of rock, see. They had to round them and then chip grooves in them, and then by water power they used to run these stones, and they'd chop the flour in the mill."

"Do you remember what kind of rock it was?"

"No, I don't."

"But Ginder knew?"

"Yeah, you betcha Ginder knowed."

"Philip Ginder wasn't out hunting, then, that day?"

"Oh, no, not hunting."

"He wasn't hunting at all?"

"No, not that I know. He was a fella that used to build mills—gristmills—to grind. He made flour and chop and stuff like that . . . that was his trade."

Old Bill Breiner said that he first heard the story about Philip Ginder from his uncle, Tom Neyer, who was a son of Joe Neyer, the blacksmith who had tested the coal for Philip Ginder in his forge. The story he was relating for the tape recorder had come down through the years as a family tradition, he explained.

"How old were you when you first heard the story?"

"Oh, probably about seven, eight years old, but there was great talk, you know."

"You mean the people around here talked about it?"

"Yeah. Lots of talk about it."

"Did Joe Neyer continue burning anthracite?"

"After that he didn't burn charcoal no more. He got coal and done his blacksmith business with it, and so did Joe's boy, Tom, after him."

Breiner remembered another source for the millstone motif in the Ginder legend—his maternal grandmother. Her maiden name was Matilda Miller and she was married to a pioneer railroader, Louis Fenstermacher. "She used to talk, you know, about that stuff, too, when we were little boys . . . She was raised in the neighborhood where Ginder was."

"What did she tell about Philip Ginder that you can remember?"

"Well, just about what you got here; that he found the coal and stuff like that, and that he was lookin' for millstones, and that's the way the coal—."

"She had the same story as your uncle?"

"Yeah, she had the same story. He [Ginder] was lookin' for millstones, and he rolled the stone around and he saw this black stuff, and old Joe Neyer burned it in his blacksmith shop."

Mrs. Snyder, who is in her fifties, corroborated her father at this point saying that she remembered her great-grandmother Fenstermacher telling stories about Philip Ginder.

"In the morning after breakfast," recollected Mrs. Snyder, "she'd fill her pipe, and then she'd sit down on her rocking chair for about a quarter of an hour of smoking, and then she'd have her run about these people, you know, and—."

"She talked about the Ginders?"

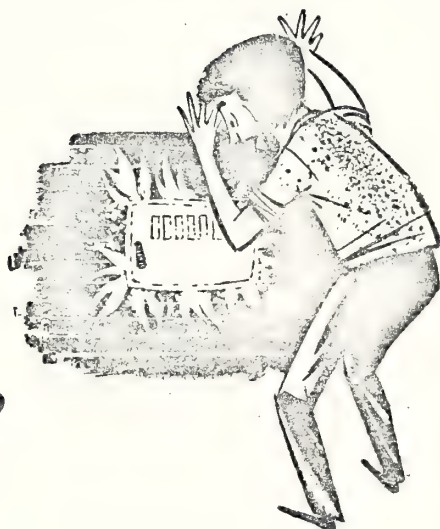
"Yes, she told many a thing about the Ginders."

"Did she talk about Philip Ginder in connection with coal?"

"Yes, that was her rhyme."

Now we know why Philip Ginder was on Sharp Mountain in 1791 when he accidentally discovered anthracite. It was not wild game that he was after, but conglomerate millstones for a gristmill. He was not then a hunter—poor or otherwise—but a millwright and a miller.⁶⁵

BREAKING INTO PHILADELPHIA



Philadelphia, from the very beginning of the anthracite industry, has been the capital of King Coal. It was chiefly Philadelphia money that financed the pioneer operations in anthracite mining. It was Philadelphia that furnished the first real industrial and domestic market for hard coal. It was, again, largely Philadelphia capital that provided transportation facilities for bringing anthracite out of the mountain fastnesses where Nature had hidden it and carrying it to the densely-peopled parts of the country.*

If Proper Philadelphia can be said to be the capital of an empire, then its chief colony is the anthracite . . . region of northeastern Pennsylvania. Profits from the "black-gold" . . . built many mansions around Rittenhouse Square and spacious estates along the Main Line. The Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company, often called the "Old Company," has been a veritable Proper Philadelphia institution down through the years.**

* *The Girard Letter*, published by the Girard Trust Corn Exchange Bank, Philadelphia, November, 1928, p. 5.

** E. Digby Baltzell, *Philadelphia Gentlemen, The Making of a National Upper Class* (Glencoe, Ill., 1958), p. 118.

FROM HIS PRIMITIVE MINE ATOP SHARP MOUNTAIN, COLONEL JACOB WEISS looked wistfully across an expanse of mountain, valley, and plain, all thickly covered with virgin timber. His eyes turned in the direction of Philadelphia, the city, he thought, that had everything to turn this wilderness into an industrial beehive—brains, technical knowledge, finance capital, and what was of more immediate concern to him, the market to buy every ton of his stone coal.

Although no longer the national capital, Philadelphia nevertheless was still the metropolis of young America, the first city in population, wealth, and culture. No wonder Colonel Weiss and his successors at Summit Hill took risks and made sacrifices to break into the Philadelphia market.

Nothing but grief and disappointment had resulted from the Lehigh Coal Mine Company's efforts to develop its property. The mountain of coal discovered by Philip Ginder, potentially worth millions of dollars, brought the original shareholders no return on their investment. Instead of drawing dividends, the shares were assessed repeatedly to keep the company solvent. In this case, coal dust would not turn into pay dirt.

Curiously, mining was the least costly part of the operations: the German farmers occasionally hired for coal cutting received a pittance for their labors. Nor had the primitive road from the coal deposits to the river landing cost much.

The Lehigh River, on the other hand, mocked man's efforts to tame it for commerce. Sharp slabs of slate and rock, like the jagged teeth of monstrous prehistoric beasts, jutted out of the channel. In high water they were covered by the churning current, which posed a constant menace to unwary boatmen and raftsmen. Among the dangers was a chain of slaty ledges stretching across the waist of the river about seven miles above Allentown; the slate was too hard for wedging and too shelly for blasting. Efforts to clear the channel had cost the Lehigh Coal Mine Company thirty thousand dollars¹ of its own capital, and an additional ten thousand dollars² from a legal lottery. For pioneer days these were large sums of money, and all spent in vain!

Of the company's big three shareholders, only Colonel Weiss lived long enough to see his faith vindicated. By then it was too late for him to receive any profits, as he was out of the business. His brother-in-law, Charles Cist, the Philadelphia printer, had moved to Bethlehem to be closer to the coal deposits; in the fall of 1805, returning

from a tour of the property, he died of apoplexy, and was buried in the old Moravian cemetery in Bethlehem. He had lost everything in this coal mining venture, as had Michael Hillegas, who died one year earlier than Cist.³

Colonel Weiss and his associates were not the only ones to face defeat, disappointment, and financial loss in frequent invasions of Philadelphia. The folklore of the industry's pioneer era reflects many other early struggles for recognition, as indicated by the following anecdote:

The history of the introduction of anthracite as a fuel is not unlike the story of the countryman's dog-skin. His dog died, and taking the skin to town he offered it for sale. He found no purchaser. He next proposed to give it away, but found no one willing to take it as a gift. He then resolved to lose it, but a well-meaning old woman seeing it fall from his wagon, picked it up and ran after him with the information, "Mister, you have lost your dog-skin."

Dashing it into his wagon, the countryman in his vexation swore he could neither sell, give it away nor lose it.⁴

"My father procured a lump of Lehigh coal about as large as his two fists," related an early traveler, "and tried it on his wood fire in an open Franklin stove. After two days he concluded that if the world should take fire, the Lehigh coal mine would be the safest retreat, the last place to burn."⁵

In 1798 Colonel Weiss's fellow shareholder, William Henry, living in the Moravian town of Nazareth, had received 114 bushels of this coal to use as fuel in the manufacture of two thousand muskets for the Commonwealth. He turned the coal over to his blacksmith, Christian Miksch, who made a faithful effort to burn it, even when he was laughed at by his fellow townsmen. He altered his fireplace this way and that, and placed his tuciron higher and lower, but no experiment seemed to work. Finally, after four days of frustration, he flew into a rage to the accompaniment of *Dunnerwedders*, in the Pennsylvania Dutch dialect, and threw the black stones into the cobbled street. Then, while still furious, he went running to William Henry's house. Face to face with his boss, he shouted: "I can do nothing with your black stones, and therefore threw them out of my shop into the street. I can't make them burn. If you want any work with them you may do it yourself. Everybody laughs at me for being such a fool as to try to make stones burn, and they say that *you* must be a fool for bringing them to Nazareth."⁶

One of the earliest attempts to invade the Philadelphia market with stone coal was made in 1806 by William Turnbull who risked his life floating on a coal-laden ark. Smudged from head to foot with coal dust, he presented a curious figure. Finding no individual customers, Turnbull finally disposed of his cargo at a loss to the "Pepper Pot," as Philadelphians humorously called the pumping station of the city water works in Center Square. The boiler having no grates, one shovelful of coal was enough to smother the fire. What remained of Turnbull's cargo was broken up into small pieces and spread like gravel on the walks around the Pepper Pot. And for days and weeks afterward, the city's taverns rang with laughter accompanying the repetition of this story of Turnbull's misadventure.⁷

John Binns, editor-publisher of the *Philadelphia Democratic Press*, in 1810 or 1811 received a wagonload of Lehigh coal from a friend in the hope that he would try burning the anthracite and then write a story about the experiment in his newspaper. In the following anecdote, Binns relates what happened:

To enable me so to do, I paid a stovemaker fifty dollars for a semicircular sheet-iron stove, and had it put up in my private office in order to burn that coal. A sufficiency of charcoal, it was thought, was put into the stove, and the coal, which was in pretty large lumps, laid on the red hot charcoal. To assist ignition we drew and kept together the circular sheet-iron stove doors. It was a cold morning; there were some half-dozen friends watching the experiment: but, alas and alackaday! After some hours, and the consumption of much charcoal, the stone coal would not burn; all it would do was to look red, like stones in a well-heated lime-kiln. When taken out at night, the coals were, to all appearance, as large as when first cast into the stove. The coal thus sent was, probably, taken from the surface of the mine, where it had long been exposed to the weather in all seasons. The size of the coal sent was also much against its consumption, as was subsequently ascertained by experience. Whatever was the cause, such was the result of the first attempt to burn Lehigh coal in Philadelphia, where, since that time, millions of tons of it have been welcomed and consumed.⁸

Popular in anthracite folklore is the anecdote about Colonel George Shoemaker, pioneer Schuylkill County coal mine operator and hotel-keeper, and the treatment he received in 1812 when he arrived in the City of Brotherly Love with nine coal-laden wagons. The coal had come from a primitive mine which he owned jointly with Necho Allen, Schuylkill County's anthracite folk hero, at Centreville, later

known as North America, near Pottsville. Colonel Shoemaker talked himself hoarse trying to sell his coal. Finally, he disposed of two wagonloads for the cost of transportation and gave the rest away to home owners who promised to experiment with its use.

Unable to kindle the coal, the freeloaders denounced the colonel as a swindler and imposter who should not be at large cheating honest burghers. He narrowly escaped being mobbed or dragged off to the clink. Luckily for Shoemaker, and the future of the anthracite industry, some of his coal found its way into the rolling mill of Mellon & Bishop in Delaware County, and after some intelligent experimenting, it was burned successfully. So pleased was the company that it advertised its success in the newspapers, and other manufacturers tried it. Among them was the firm of White & Hazard whose wire mill was located at the Falls of the Schuylkill, then about five miles from downtown Philadelphia.⁹

Like other Philadelphia-area manufacturers, Josiah White and Erskine Hazard faced the closing of their mill because of a shortage of water-borne bituminous caused by a British naval blockade of the Atlantic seaboard. Philadelphia was feeling the effects of the War of 1812. Under the circumstances, White and Hazard were quite receptive to word from the coal agents, Steelwagon and Knight, that an ark containing twenty-four tons of stone coal had arrived unexpectedly at a wharf.

Even though it was the Sabbath—August 14, 1814—White and Hazard hurried down to the wharf. There they were surprised to see a crew of six boys taking their ease at a battered ark loaded with the controversial stone coal from the Lehigh region. The young men could not have appeared stranger if they had come from outer space. They were stripped to the waist, and fresh wounds and bruises showed through their coal grime and perspiration as if they had been through a battle. They had barely survived several days' battling with a savage and treacherous foe—the Lehigh River with its rocky channel and churning rapids. Their trouble began almost at the outset when their ark struck a ledge, causing her to take water through a hole in her bow. The boys stripped themselves nearly naked, using their clothes to stop the rush of water. And so it was down the length of the Lehigh as far as Easton where the mountain stream merged with the Delaware. "We're glad to be alive," Jacob Cist, the leader, told Josiah White and Erskine Hazard.¹⁰

WILKES-BARRE SENDS AN EXPEDITION

This historical river misadventure had its origin in an idea conceived by two bright young men of Wilkes-Barre: Charles Miner (1780–1865) and Jacob Cist (1782–1825).

One evening during the winter of 1813, they were in the Cist parlor sitting in front of a glowing anthracite hearth fire chatting about their favorite subject, the future of the anthracite trade.¹¹ Cist owned several shares in the moribund Lehigh Coal Mine Company, which he had inherited from his father, Charles Cist, one of the founders. While then worthless, the shares nevertheless gave them the idea they discussed that evening—namely, the feasibility of leasing the company's Summit Hill mine, quarrying some coal from the outcrop, and floating it on scows, or arks, to Philadelphia. The War of 1812 had created a severe fuel shortage in the city, and that gave them their opportunity.

Miner and Cist were outstanding young men—courageous, resourceful, and enterprising. Miner was Wilkes-Barre's leading newspaper editor; Cist, the town's postmaster. Both were far ahead of their times in promoting canals and railroads, as well as anthracite.

Charles Miner, a native of Norwich, Connecticut, had come to Wilkes-Barre early in the nineteenth century. To Wilkes-Barre's *Luzerne Federalist* for September 7, 1810, he had contributed an essay "Who'll Turn Grindstone," that was widely copied. In it he coined the phrase "to have an axe to grind," that has become part of the English language. In 1813, in the *Gleaner*, successor to the *Federalist*, he ran a series, "Essays from the Desk of Poor Robert the Scribe," that made him famous. The next year he wrote and published the moving ballad, "James Bird," about a neighbor's son who met an ironically tragic fate in the War of 1812. This ballad is found in many anthologies and is still being sung and collected.¹²

Jacob Cist, a native of Philadelphia, had come to Wilkes-Barre in 1808, the year he was appointed postmaster, and became a business partner of his father-in-law, Judge Matthias Hollenback. He was at home in science, music, poetry, prose, and painting. Having learned about anthracite on his father's knee, Jacob Cist had a sound, practical knowledge of the subject and a keen desire to enter the business of producing it. Meanwhile, he used his literary talents to promote

the new fuel.¹³ During the War of 1812, he sent several specimens of anthracite to Dr. James Mease, at that time secretary of the Philadelphia Society for Promoting Agriculture. In a letter he told of the virtues of anthracite, especially as a fuel for the common people. "How many miserable wretches, who shiver over your wood fires, which costs from 6 to 8 dollars per cord, could be made comfortable at half the price?" he asked rhetorically.¹⁴

Pearce's *Annals of Wilkes-Barre* tells of his and Miner's pro-anthracite activity at this time: "The pens of Charles Miner and Jacob Cist of Wilkes-Barre were now busily employed in giving information on the use and value of anthracite coal. The newspapers of that day published in New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore bear ample testimony to the ability with which the subject was commended to the public. Mr. Cist sent specimens of Wyoming [Valley] coal to all the large cities in the Union, to England, France, Germany, and even to Russia."¹⁵

With all that enthusiasm, Miner and Cist felt impelled to take a chance on the Summit Hill coal mine. Joined by John W. Robinson, a Wilkes-Barre businessman, they obtained a ten-year lease from the Lehigh Coal Mine Company. According to Miner, the terms authorized them "to take what coal we pleased, and to use what lumber we could find and might need on their tract of ten thousand acres of land, the only consideration exacted being that we should work the mines, and every year take to the city [Philadelphia] a small quantity of coal, and the coal to remain our own. The extreme favorable terms of the lease to us will show how the property was then estimated, how difficult a matter it was then deemed to bring the coal to market, and how great were the obstacles to bringing it into common use."¹⁶

The lease was not as one-sided as it appears. Colonel Weiss and his associates were taking a long-range view of the situation. They counted on the promoters, Miner and Cist, to educate the Philadelphia public to an acceptance of anthracite for heating and cooking, thereby opening the market for the Lehigh Coal Mine Company. The lessees had hoped to make a profit, but they would have been well satisfied to break even. Their motivation was more complicated, as recollected by James A. Gordon, one of their employees, many years after the event.

"Beside the anticipated golden harvest," Gordon reminisced, "the whole thing was a romance. Here was a chance for adventure well

sued to their prolific imagination, beside an eternity of glorious posthumous fame."¹⁷

It was in this debonair spirit that Miner and Cist had prepared to fit out an expedition. Although an on-the-ground investigation had preceded the signing of the lease, the partners somehow overlooked the availability of competent German workers living within walking distance of the coal deposits. Instead of hiring them, the business partners organized an expedition in Wilkes-Barre of "teams, miners, ark builders and other workmen from a distance." Charles Miner justified this extra expense by saying that the "situation at Mauch Chunk, in the midst of barren mountains and a sparse population, rendered it necessary . . ."¹⁸

More practical businessmen would have engaged experienced craftsmen and hardy men for an expedition involving so many uncertainties and hardships. Miner and Cist, for reasons best known to themselves, hired mostly boys from Wilkes-Barre's socially prominent families, and a few outsiders, and made Abiel Abbott, a master carpenter, their boss.

Remembering their Sunday School lessons, the boys envisioned the wild Lehigh country as "Canaan's Land," which they were preparing to conquer. Among these juvenile crusaders were "a good Latin scholar," "a natural-born poet," one "principally noted for his musical powers," and a fourth young man who had "a faculty of introducing himself to every pretty girl he met, and generally talked sweet to her at the first interview."¹⁹

Came the dawn of July 17, 1814. Shouldering a knapsack and carrying such tools as adzes, chisels, bench planes, and crosscut saws, the youths drew up in march formation behind their boss, Abiel Abbott. Goodbyes to their red-eyed mammas and sweethearts dutifully accomplished, they marched off as to war singing lustily an improvised parody on "The Girl I Left Behind Me."

Following are two recollected verses:

We shall be lonesome o'er the hills,
Alas! We cannot help it;
Our hearts with grief are sore opprest
For the girls we left behind us.

On Lehigh's banks we'll think of you,
Our orisons when saying;
Cold be our hearts when we forget
The girls we leave behind us.²⁰

No platoon of raw army recruits used as much energy and poured out so much perspiration hiking up and down mountains in one day as did these gently-bred youths of Wilkes-Barre's aristocracy. The distance between Wilkes-Barre and Hazleton was thirty miles and they made it in good time. The last part of their hike took them over the Lehigh and Susquehanna Turnpike, locally known as the Berwick Turnpike, that brought them to the tavern of Jacob Drumheller for supper and a well-earned night's rest. They were unaware of it, but their meeting with Drumheller had historic significance in that he was Hazleton's first known settler. His tavern, the only house between Beaver Meadows and Conyngham, was Hazleton's first building.

Continuing his recollections, James A. Gordon wrote:

Here ended our day's journey. We had scarcely stacked our arms when Charles Miner rode up on a brisk trot from the direction of Conyngham.

Mrs. Drumheller began to develop her abilities as [a] hostess, while Abiel Abbott and Chester Dana were trying their skill at making a tin blickey of egg nogg with "cider ile"²¹ and slight sprinkling of local option. Within an hour Mrs. Drumheller marshalled us to the dinner table, and such a dinner—shall I give the bill of fare? Venison steak, trout, fresh from Hazle Creek, fried and boiled eggs, capital bread with fresh butter, and sour kroust for dessert. There you have it, ye modern epicures. Can you realize this picture? Glory to the memory of Mrs. Drumheller

Before we had retired Jacob Drumheller came home with a team from Briar Creek. I think it belonged to Jesse Bowman. At any rate, Boss Abbott soon made a bargain with the teamster to carry our loads to Klotz's at the Lehigh Landing [Lausanne], as it was then designated.

This Jacob Drumheller was about the fairest specimen of physical humanity I have ever met with; about twenty-five years old, six feet two inches high, and remarkably well-developed. [He was] clad in hunting shirt of *Linsey Woolsey* with buckskin pants and fox skin cap. He afterwards represented Luzerne County two or three years in the lower House, and in the Senate

Joe Thomas and myself slept together under a feather cover. We found in the morning Mr. D's lunch on the table.

Joe said, "Let us march."

"Agreed," says I.

The boys were all asleep while we were measuring off the miles on the Berwick Turnpike. We reached Klotz's tavern at the landing at 7 o'clock. Charles Miner was washing himself on the porch.

"Halloo!" says he, "what a pity you had not been born a hundred years ago. Wm. Penn would have given you a job to walk his treaty lines."

During the day our stragglers arrived, and reported at headquarters. Yes, our headquarters [was at] a Dutch tavern about half way between Klotz's and the mouth of Mauch Chunk Creek. Where Mauch Chunk is now, was then a dense laurel chapperel. At this place we luckily found a grindstone, and during Saturday afternoon we put every tool in order for Monday morning's work.

Before sundown Bob Young arrived from Heidleburgh[sic] with the company's team, laden with horse-feed and *spec and oyer*, or in plain English, gammon and eggs. Mr. Miner boarded at Klotz's, but had been with us all the afternoon, and seemed very restive because Bob was so long coming. I found out, however, before dark what ailed him. He took me by the arm and said, "You are the only boy here that I feel free to ask a favor from; they seem to be so tired, and you appear so fresh."

I knew at once that he had an "axe to grind," for I had read "Poor Robert, the Scribe."

"Well, Mr. Miner, what is it?"

"Now," said he, "I am afraid Nathaniel Miner is starving up at the mines. I want you to take one of the horses before daylight tomorrow morning, and take some provisions to him. If you will, I will give [you] a dollar."

"I will, Mr. Miner, but not for your dollar. I will go now, if you think I can find the road. Nathaniel Miner must not hunger if I can help it."

"No, morning will do; Robert will load you."

Nathaniel Miner was the miner for the company. He had contracted to take out 1,200 tons of coal at \$1 per ton, at the Summit mines, ten miles distant from Mauch Chunk, and the company were bound to deliver his provisions at market prices.

Before daylight next morning I was mounted, with a fine large ham and two loaves of bread in a bag laid across the saddle, and a basket of eggs and butter on my arm; Robert Young guided me until I was fairly on the track, and then left me to pursue my journey solitary and alone

I had a pleasant ride, the sun, laggard as he was that morning, finally came over the Blue Mountain, and before he had told an hour on the dial, I saw a man just ahead of me sitting upon a log by the side of the road. When he saw me he sprang to his feet, and approached. He did not speak. He felt of the bag and reached for the basket. I gave it at once; my arm was tired. A few rods brought us to his cabin. It was Nathaniel Miner, a Connecticut man, and by trade a stone mason.

In less time than I can tell it, he had a rasher on a stake roasting before the fire; and some eggs in a stew pan for boiling. A ten miles' ride had given me quite as good an appetite as Nathaniel manifested, and the *spec and oyer* were capital.

My purpose in writing this paper was to give some account of

the coal business at that early day, and the difficulties encountered by the pioneers.

The Summit mines had a depth of about sixty feet, and without a rock roof. The covering of earth and gravel, about eight feet thick, must be removed. Before Miner, Cist & Co. commenced, a small opening had been made, I think by Jacob Weiss of Weissport, and a few loads taken out. Mining was little understood at that time. Nathaniel Miner's process was simply to uncover and quarry in the same way he would stone, and with a wheel-barrow deposit the coal at a convenient point for loading into the wagons—no mining car was used. He did his work alone at the time I visited him. He estimated the amount ready for the wagons at six hundred tons

On Monday morning we commenced work and in due time completed the contract for Miner and Cist. Four arks ready for loading at the first freshet

At this time we all boarded at Klotz's, and it is needless to say that with such a company we could not fail of plenty of music and fun. Sometimes Mr. Miner would read to us from a book or newspaper an interesting story—but I could never find the story he seemed to read in the newspaper afterwards.

We were all now anxiously awaiting a freshet. It came at last [on August 9, 1814]. All was bustle. Four arks were loaded and the crews made up. Our Shawnee friends were among the best water men of the Susquehanna, and all eager for the trip to Philadelphia. Lehigh pilots were on hand. The fleet moved off down the rapid current. I was on the hindmost ark. In about fifteen minutes we brought up on what raftmen called the Red Rocks, half a mile below Mauch Chunk. I got very handsomely baptised. Mr. Hillhouse was on the shore on horseback, and I rode behind him back to Klotz's with my enthusiasm considerably neutralized. The other arks entered the Delaware in safety and in good order, but from the unskillfulness of the Delaware pilot were all stove up upon the entering rock of Well's Falls, a short distance below New Hope.

The company got but one ark through to Philadelphia, which they sold to White & Hazard, wire manufacturers at the Falls of Schuylkill²²

ORDEAL BY FIRE

The ordeal by fire started late in the afternoon on Monday, August 15, 1814, when the Miner, Cist & Company coal was delivered at the wire mill. Josiah White and Erskine Hazard were on hand to observe, supervise, and encourage their workers in the experiment.

Mistakenly they tried to kindle anthracite the way they formerly did bituminous, which lights more easily and burns more quickly. Time and again they would reopen the furnace door to find the inside dark and cold; not a flicker in sight, not a single sound of combustion, not even the suggestion of warmth.

Many times during the night, the workers were ready to quit and go home, but Josiah White ordered them to stay on the job. "Keep on trying," he urged. The workers shrugged their shoulders, sighed, and tried again with another fresh load.

Finally, White himself had to admit defeat. At dawn the boss said, "Better go home." The drowsy workers put on their jackets and walked away in silence and despair. One of the men lingered for some last-minute miracle inside the furnace. Seeing none, he slammed the door shut and followed the others. Somehow he had overlooked his jacket hanging from a nail on the wall. Returning for it later, he was amazed to see the furnace door red hot. The furnace was at a glowing white heat. The worker ran to Josiah White's home. Pounding on the front door, he shouted, "The mill's afire!"

White hurried back to the mill. Lehigh's stone coal was burning clean, with a steady heat, and without smoke or the odor of sulphur. Four separate parcels of iron were heated and rolled by the same fire, and there was little ash. The black stones, rich in carbon, burned as diamonds might—to the heart.²³

That was a night to remember—the night when anthracite gave up its secret.

But this hard-won success still made no appreciable change in Philadelphia's attitude toward stone coal. Miner and Cist had hand-bills printed in English and German telling how to burn anthracite in homes, blacksmith shops, and factories; they distributed testimonials from those who had used the fuel economically; and they went from house to house kindling anthracite in grates built to burn English coal. But as soon as the War of 1812 was over, ending the British naval blockade of the coast, Philadelphians went back to wood, charcoal, and bituminous, while the hard-kindling anthracite fell to a price far below the cost of shipment, putting Miner and Cist out of business.

"This effort of ours," Miner wrote afterwards, "might be regarded as the acorn from which has sprung the mighty oak of the Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company."²⁴

ACTION ON THE LEHIGH

The chief result of the successful experiment was to turn Josiah White's mind from the Schuylkill River, where he had first sought to operate under an enabling law, to the Lehigh River. A tall, broad-shouldered Quaker, White conceived a plan to tame the river, develop the Summit Hill mine, and persuade Philadelphia to buy his coal for all purposes—cooking, heating, and smelting. This was a challenge calling for the strength, courage, resourcefulness, and mechanical ingenuity of an industrial Paul Bunyan. His associate, Erskine Hazard, with his gentle and retiring nature, set off White's own forceful personality. George F. A. Hauto, another associate, was dropped when he was found to be less a man than he had represented himself as being.

A half-dozen attempts, all backed up by special laws, had been made to clear the Lehigh River for coal shipments before White and Hazard had come on the scene. When they applied for a new law, the chairman of the legislative committee said ironically, "Gentlemen, you have our permission—to ruin yourselves." The new law was passed on March 20, 1818.²⁵

The Lehigh Navigation Company was organized in August, 1818, under a state act authorizing it to clear the channel. Two months later the Lehigh Coal Company came into existence, taking over all the coal lands and real estate controlled by White, Hazard, and Hauto. By 1820 when the original capital had been used up on improvements, White and Hazard found that the companies were dependent on each other, and that neither could survive by itself. This led to their merger. A state charter which gave the new corporation, the Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company, sole control of the Lehigh River, in addition to the coal mining rights, was granted on February 13, 1822.²⁶

Operations were started at Lausanne, the former Landing, where the Nesquehoning Creek empties into the river.²⁷ Wherever shallow, the river was contracted into a series of funnels which deepened the flow of water.

The next year, however, this system was found impractical and inadequate. Josiah White then turned his inventive mind to designing a system that would create freshets. "And if we failed in this,"

he told his stockholders, "our whole work would be exploded and have to be abandoned."²⁸

Nearly a thousand workers were employed simultaneously on three major projects—in the river, on a new road from coal mine to river landing, and on the building of a company town—Mauch Chunk. As White wrote, "They came from all nations—and as strangers to us."²⁹

Among them must have been many rough characters reminiscent of Swift's Yahoos, that put White in fear of his life. He stopped payment by cash: "We have directed the bank not to pay, unless signed by at least two of us, so if any wild hands catch either of us alone in the woods, he hath not the inducement to waylay us . . ."³⁰

It took tough characters to work here. The hardships were almost unbearable. This was true especially of the rivermen who worked from sunrise to dark, knee-deep in water, seven or eight months of the year. To cut down the number of colds and pneumonia cases, White designed a special uniform for his men, known in the Lehigh Valley as "the Mauch Chunk costume," which he himself wore. It consisted of a cap, a sailor's roundabout coat, buckskin vest and pants, red flannel shirt—all oil-tanned for waterproofing—and a pair of heavy, coarse boots with open toes to let water run off.³¹ The laborers, and White himself, lived in scows that floated downriver as the work progressed. Their bunks were rough planks with a layer of straw on the surface, and they covered themselves with company-issued blankets. Their food was nothing to write home about. Yet they were forbidden to waste it ("Any hand taking more victuals on his plate than he can eat is to be cobb'd").

Rules of discipline called "cob law" were adopted with the aid of representatives of the laborers. As most of the men were merchant seamen idled by The Embargo before the War of 1812 and by the effects of the war, they well understood what being cobb'd meant; one of the punishments was being beaten over the buttocks with a flat piece of wood, or cob.³²

These ruffians were accustomed to whiskey, and an understanding Josiah White saw to it that they received daily rations of it. The allowance became known as "billy cups" after the jigger boss, William Speers, who had no other duties. This custom is described in the following two verses of a once popular ballad, "When Old Mauch Chunk Was Young," sung to the tune of "John Anderson, My Jo"—

When old Mauch Chunk was young,
J——* used to say,
A man that labored hard should have
Six Billy cups a day.
And so, with an unsparing hand,
The whiskey flood was flung,
And drunkards they were made by scores
When old Mauch Chunk was young.

When old Mauch Chunk was young,
At noon they blew the horn,
And, gathering thick, came gangs of men,
And so at eve and morn.
With grace and promptitude and skill
They moistened lip and tongue
And went to work in rain and mud
When old Mauch Chunk was young.³³

In addition to the regular whiskey allowance, the men had access to a company saloon, which was in the nature of a poor man's club. There being no organized recreation or commercial amusement, the men provided their own. They might sing sea chanties, dance—or fight. It didn't take much to start a fight. A casual remark, a personal slight, or an insult to one's country would be enough to start two men mauling each other with their fists. Once a fight got under way there was no stopping it until one or the other of the fighters had been knocked out. You couldn't show a feather in this crowd of toughs. Often, when things became too quiet in Mauch Chunk, the men marched on nearby Lehighton to pick a fight with the hands working there.

White and Hazard had planned to build their town on flat land at the mouth of the Nesquehoning Creek, but the owners, thinking that coal underlay their land, set too high a price on their property. The company was then obliged to build a mile downriver at the mouth of Mauch Chunk Creek. A less promising townsite could not be imagined. Approached from either side by the line of the Lehigh and Susquehanna Turnpike, it was a gorge with high mountains and room but for a single street facing the river. White made the most of every inch of ground, even of the mountainside, and within a year some forty buildings, including homes, had been erected.

* Josiah White.

"The infant town of Mauch Chunk," a relative of Josiah White later recollected, "lay deep-shrouded from the sun. Walking down the single street one heard the people speaking [Pennsylvania] Dutch."³⁴

Among the original settlers were Nicholas Brink, company steward, and his wife, Margaret, who had come from Philadelphia. When a son was born to the Brinks, he was named after the three original owners of the company—Josiah White Erskine Hazard George Frederick Augustus Hauto Brink. This being Mauch Chunk's first birth, a celebration was held in which some six hundred workers participated. "The forest was illuminated with pine torches; plenty of pure old rye whiskey was drunk; and the noise and dancing were so great that it seemed as if the very tops of the pines had caught the infection, and kept time by swaying to and fro," recollected a participant.³⁵

Early in its history, probably because of its mountainous setting, Mauch Chunk became known as the "Switzerland of America," and was so publicized all over the country. Mauch Chunk is an Indian name meaning "Bear Mountain." While still a rough frontier town, Mauch Chunk began to attract tourists both for its "salubrious" air and for the firsthand view it provided of the engineering feats of Josiah White that succeeded in surmounting natural obstacles to industrial progress. Distinguished visitors were accommodated in the elegant, company-built Mansion House while the multilingual, unshaven workers were served in the company-built saloon, and the twain did meet and jostle one another on Mauch Chunk's single street. Historic Mauch Chunk is now known as Jim Thorpe.

THE SWITCHBACK RAILROAD

Considering all the natural obstacles, building the town of Mauch Chunk was one of Josiah White's greatest achievements. Taming of the Lehigh River to serve the new mining industry was also a remarkable feat; but surpassing these in popular interest and in engineering ingenuity was the "Switchback," the second important railroad constructed in the United States. White conceived this novel design of overcoming steep mountain grades by the use of inclined planes, drew up the plans, and personally supervised the construction of the railroad over an old wagon route.

The Switchback Railroad was operated entirely by gravity from the Summit Hill coal quarry to the Lehigh River, about a thousand feet below at Mauch Chunk. Excavated by means of wedges, picks, and gunpowder, the coal was loaded into one-and-a-half-ton cars drawn by horses to the mountaintop, a rise of nearly fifty feet from the quarry. There they were joined together in trains of fourteen cars each. These trains had two fixtures: a man who operated a brake by which the motion was regulated; and a car specially built for mules in which they ate their fodder. The mules became so fond of this descending ride that they would not give it up. On one occasion, it is said, the hands tried to drive them down the mountainside, but the mules balked and their car had to be sent up for them.

The cars were held to six miles an hour, but uncontrolled they might have run at the rate of forty miles an hour. At the bottom of the track the cars were let down an inclined plane or chute to the river where the coal was loaded into boats. One by one they were dropped by means of a rope, one end of which was hooked to them, while the other was wound around a drum. In going down, a car turned the drum, thus winding up the empty car that had gone down before it. The motion, requiring only a minute and a half, was regulated by a man at the head of the plane who operated a compound lever.

The empty cars were drawn up the mountain by mules. Going down had taken only a half hour, while the return trip required three hours. The mules walked in paths on both sides of the track. The Switchback had a single track, except at its two ends and in the middle, where there were two tracks to allow trains to pass each other.

When the company's production increased substantially, the slow return of empties became uneconomical and the mules were doomed. A back track from the river to Summit Hill was constructed by means of inclined lifts, or planes. The first, known as the "Lumber Plane," powered by a water wheel, was located on a plateau some two hundred feet above the river.

The next plateau was the top of Mount Pisgah, nine hundred feet above the river, where empty coal cars were drawn up a steep mountainside by an endless iron band that derived its power from a stationary engine. Mount Pisgah commanded a breath-taking view of the surrounding mountainous country. The cars passed through the

enginehouse at the mountaintop and over a trestle spanning a wild ravine. To the south was the Blue Mountain, the great divide between the Pennsylvania German agricultural counties and the new anthracite industrial region. To the north loomed the Broad Mountain. On a clear day one could see Lehigh Gap, about eleven miles away, where the Lehigh forced its way through the Blue Mountain. Even Schooley's Mountain, near Hackettstown, New Jersey, sixty-five miles away by rail, was visible. In every direction there spread a panorama of mountains, valleys, and ravines, and a scattering of mine patches that looked like clusters of toy houses. Far below flowed the Lehigh River hiding its turbulence from view.

From Mount Pisgah a gravity road was laid down to the foot of Mount Jefferson, six miles away. There another plane elevated the cars to the mountaintop, a rise of more than four hundred feet. From this point the empties were returned by gravity to Summit Hill.

In 1844 when annual coal shipments were approaching the half-million-ton mark, Josiah White's company began underground mining in the Panther Valley. One of the first mines was opened at Coaldale. To get this valley coal fast and economically to the Lehigh Canal, another plane was erected. The coal trains were hoisted up the mountain to Summit Hill and went down the main Switchback track with the Summit Hill coal. A gravity system was also built for the return of empty cars to the valley mines. The descent being steep, the empties were zigzagged back and forth along the mountainside to control their speed. While lowered by gravity, the cars were switched automatically. This novel way of operating gave the entire gravity system the name of "Switchback." Tourists from all over the world came to see this unique invention.³⁶

THE COAL CUTTERS

From his remarkable achievements in engineering on land and on water, Josiah White turned to the company's coal deposit at Summit Hill. This is what it looked like to him in the beginning:

The coal mine at present worked by the company lies on top of a mountain [Sharp], and appears to extend over some hundred acres of land covered by about twelve feet of loose black dirt resembling moist gunpowder, which can be removed by cattle with scrapers and thrown into the valley below so as never to impede

the work. The thickness of the coal is not known, but a shaft has been in it thirty-five feet without penetrating through. More than an acre of mine has been uncovered by the company, and presents a huge rock of coal which is easily quarried without blowing.³⁷

The moderately-sized coal quarry lay on the opposite side of the mountain from Mauch Chunk, a little below the summit. Being on the mountainside solved the quarry's drainage problem. Refuse coal and rock were dumped into the valley, and in time several high dirt banks were thus formed. The last of these banks remained as a landmark for many years after quarrying was abandoned in 1844. Old-timers remember that its crest dominated the landscape to the southwest of the built-up portion of Summit Hill Borough, south of Railroad Street, and almost in the rear of the one-time Summit Inn.

That outcrop of the Mammoth seam at Summit Hill was America's first bonanza. It was truly a natural phenomenon—the result, probably, of a violent disruption in geologic time. Neither Philip Ginder who discovered it, nor the disillusioned investors who had failed to profit from it, nor even the brilliant Josiah White himself, had a glimmer of an idea of how much black gold lay buried under this mountain.

The undulation of coal seams, forming basins and saddles, had not yet been discovered when White started tapping this treasure. It was then universally believed that the coal stopped at the water level. Every outcrop was regarded as a distinct seam, but whether it ran to the antipodes, or wedged out in Gnomes' Land—the sphere of the guardian of mines and quarries—was a moot question. Geologists were still to establish the fact that anthracite seams stopped their descent in one place only, to return to the surface in another.

The Summit Hill outcrop that someday was to be developed into the world-famous "Great Mine" looked to White like a quarry. Coal was to be excavated as in a stone quarry—that is, by cutting. The term "coal cutting" described the operation, and the Pennsylvania Germans who did the work became known as "coal cutters."³⁸ These terms were in general use until supplanted by the terminology of the immigrant miners from England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland: "coal hewer," "collier," and "miner."

Quarrying required little technical training. Strong, steady, and reliable workers were called for, and White found them in the nearby agricultural valleys. German farmers were glad that these jobs were out in the open, in sunlight, so that it seemed as if they were tilling

their own fields. Some even brought their young sons along to help with the work.

Pick and wedge were the coal cutters' basic tools. A shovel or their own strong arms transferred the coal from the quarry floor into wheelbarrows, horsedrawn wagons, and later, when the Switchback gravity railroad was completed, one-and-a-half-ton cars. Sledges broke the coal into smaller lumps. Where the coal was too far down, pits thirty to forty feet deep were sunk and the coal was brought up in buckets by windlass.

With experience the Pennsylvania Dutch coal cutters acquired a certain skill that enabled them to produce more coal with less effort. A wedge driven expertly between coal seams and paralleling rock and slate strata loosened a mass of coal. A deft swing of the pick on natural joints, also running parallel to the strata, saved time, energy, and sweat—and the company's money; by striking a joint, a pick fractured the coal's rhomboidal structure, bringing down tons of coal, rock, and slate with a single thrust. Black gunpowder also came into use to blast the coal down.

Pennsylvania Dutch coal cutters were not herded into river scows or into forest labor camps as were most of the other laborers. They enjoyed the comforts of their own farm homes. The practical consideration here was that their homes were within walking distance of Summit Hill where they worked. The arrangement was mutually satisfactory; the company was spared billeting and feeding expenses, while they, the coal cutters, could hold on to their ancestral farms and pursue their traditional way of life.³⁹

To get to and from Summit Hill, they used a short cut, Neyer's mountain path, the one walked by Philip Ginder when he brought down his newly-discovered black stones in 1791. The path ran along Joe Neyer's log blacksmith shop where Ginder's coal was tested in the forge. Three or four generations of Pennsylvania Dutchmen later followed this path going to and from their work in Summit Hill and in the Old Company's Panther Valley mines.

Here, early in the nineteenth century, was the beginning of a social pattern unique with the Pennsylvania Dutch. Wherever coal-bearing hills cast their shadows on lush, fertile Pennsylvania Dutch valleys, farmer-miners, with some exceptions, continued living in their own homes while working full-time underground in the anthracite counties of Carbon, Schuylkill (south of the Broad Mountain), Northumberland, upper Dauphin, and lower Luzerne.

THE CARGO THAT LAUNCHED AN INDUSTRY

The Pennsylvania Dutch coal cutters' first production under Josiah White's management made up a special cargo of 365 tons for Philadelphia. On a scheduled day in June, 1820, the coal was loaded into wagons and hauled down to the riverbank. There a fleet of sturdy arks "built from the tree" on company property lay waiting. Each boat had been built in sections about sixteen feet wide and about twenty-five feet long, joined together by iron hinges that allowed them to bend in passing from one dam to the next with the artificial flood. Oarsmen fore and aft steered the craft.⁴⁰

This was the largest single shipment of coal to leave the anthracite region up to that time. It was also the first test of Josiah White's invention of artificial navigation, consisting chiefly of a chain of twelve small dams, with sluice gates nicknamed "bear traps," spanning eleven miles from Mauch Chunk to the Lehigh Water Gap. (This 365-ton cargo marked the official opening of the anthracite industry.)

Is it any wonder, then, that the entire Lehigh Valley was beside itself with excitement? At the starting point off Mauch Chunk, the entire population, including nearly a thousand workers, came down to the riverbank to give the fleet a lusty sendoff. It was a beautiful day with blue skies above and the sun beating down on the crew and their precious cargo of anthracite.

At a signal from Josiah White, the long line of boats started moving slowly downstream as cheers rent the air. Upon reaching the second dam, the fleet paused to permit the gate tender (who had been riding on the lead ark) to get off and open the sluice gates, which created artificial high water for the boats to float down the river; the gate tender then returned to his station on the ark. This procedure was repeated at each dam until the fleet had reached Lehigh Gap. There the gate tender left the fleet permanently. He walked back to Mauch Chunk, stopping to close the gates of each dam to conserve water for another fleet.

Meanwhile, the 365-ton cargo continued its journey, pausing at "The Slates," nine miles downstream from the Lehigh Gap; and from there it proceeded to the thirty-seven-mile dam, finally passing Easton where it entered the Delaware River.

The hands received an enthusiastic reception from the Moravian population of Bethlehem. A general holiday had been declared in

their honor. With schools and stores closed, everybody came down to the riverbank to see the long line of coal arks floating by, and to exchange Pennsylvania Dutch greetings with members of the crew.⁴¹ Easton, too, turned out in full force to watch the arks float from the mouth of the Lehigh into the deep channel of the Delaware River. And the hands were surprised to find a warm welcome also awaiting them at their Philadelphia wharf.

Coal agents, and others who remembered the battered old scow in which Jacob Cist had brought down a cargo of stone coal six years earlier, contrasted it with the clean, sturdy appearance of these arks. In 1814 it had taken six days to make forty-six miles from Lausanne to Easton. This fleet had floated more than one hundred miles in only a day and a half, and without incident. Six years before, Cist's cargo consisted of only 24 tons for which he asked \$21 a ton; now there were 365 tons which sold for only \$8.40. This was progress. "We fully proved by the artificial navigation our ability to send such a regular supply of coal to market as would supply all of the demand," reported Josiah White to his stockholders.⁴²

SOCIAL REVOLUTION

The demand, however, was still too limited. Only about half of the historic 365-ton cargo was sold. The rest lay in a pile on the wharf, unwanted, a symbol of Philadelphia's resistance to stone coal. Most Philadelphia families went on burning wood because it was inexpensive, abundant, and easy to buy. Wood was sold by the cord and stored in backyard sheds. Oak, hickory, and maple were the most popular woods for house fuel; pine was preferred by bakers and brick manufacturers.

One of the factors contributing to anti-anthracite prejudice in Philadelphia, New York, and New England early in the nineteenth century was fear of anthracite fires as health hazards. There were complaints from women in anthracite-heated homes that their hair and complexion lost vitality and that their eyesight and even their nerves were impaired. One New York customer told the world that anthracite "furnaces in private dwellings will hourly destroy the health of our women and children." He further declared that hot air from anthracite furnaces was largely responsible for an increase in the number of "bald heads, decayed teeth and black-craped hats."⁴³

For several decades many investigations were held by physicians, chemists, and public health authorities. There was even a book, *Anthracite and Health* (Boston, 1868), written by Dr. George Derby, a Boston City Hospital surgeon and a Harvard professor of hygiene.

Dr. Derby held that headaches, listlessness, and other afflictions were not brought on by dry air in anthracite-heated homes but by noxious gases escaping from overheated cast-iron stoves. His remedy was the installation of wrought-iron furnaces.⁴⁴

Apparently Josiah Hazard encountered prejudice of this nature in Philadelphia, and he sought to meet it head-on with the following statement in John Binns' Philadelphia *Democratic Press* of March 21, 1821:

Some say . . . the prejudice of public opinion is in favor of wood and against the use of coal Such was the opinion held by citizens of London when coal was first proposed to be used in that city as a substitute for wood . . . with the additional belief that sulphur smoke and dirt arising from bituminous coal would be injurious to the health of the city. It was about this time that London was visited by the extraordinary disease called the Plague and thereafter the great objection existed to make a change to so detrimental an article of fuel. But since coal came cheaper than wood it was eventually accepted by the poor . . . and proved healthier than wood And that was sulphur coal. Stone coal, however, is free of all smoke or black or yellow dust in burning. The residue in a parlor grate is a clean white ash and consequently the chimney never gets foul and wants no cleaning. And its beauty in an open grate exceeds any other fuel known.⁴⁵

There was another reason why many families were so reluctant to change from wood to anthracite in their home heating. They were not only accustomed to their fancy wood-burning stoves and grates, but their frugal instincts reminded them of their financial investment in these devices. Few families were in a position to throw out an expensive piece of furniture like a stove before it had worn out, or at least before they could be sure of a steady supply of anthracite at a price they could afford. Although it is not generally known, stoves had been manufactured in this country almost from the beginning of American history. As early as 1652 the general court of the Massachusetts Bay Colony granted a patent to one John Clarke for his invention of a stove.⁴⁶ In 1825 many patents were issued to inventors of all types of stoves, and a large number of them were heating homes with wood or soft coal.

In 1742 Benjamin Franklin invented what, in his autobiography, he described as "an open stove for the better warming of rooms, and at the same time saving fuel" He did not apply for a patent. The model of his invention he turned over to a friend, Robert Grace, who manufactured the stove in his iron furnace. Even though he had no financial interest in the products of his invention, he nevertheless wrote and published a pamphlet promoting his work. For many years all sorts of wood-burning stoves were called "Franklin."⁴⁷

Henry William Stiegel (1729–1785) was a stove manufacturer before he made the exquisite glass with which his name is associated. In 1852, two years after his arrival at Philadelphia from his native Germany, he had the good sense to marry his boss's daughter—Elizabeth, daughter of German ironmaster Jacob Huber, whose Elizabeth Furnace was located in what was then known as Warwick Township, Lancaster County. Until 1756, Stiegel was in partnership with his father-in-law. In that year he took in Charles and Alexander Stedman of Philadelphia as silent partners while he was resident manager. At Elizabeth Furnace he manufactured the famous cannon stoves, and six-plate and ten-plate stoves, as well as many other iron castings. Stiegel's stoves were decorative. They bore a variety of motifs, sometimes representing Stiegel's likeness, and the year of manufacture. The one built in 1769 that is exhibited as part of the George H. Danner Collection in the Hershey (Pennsylvania) Museum is considered among his best work.⁴⁸

Cannon stoves manufactured by Stiegel were commonly used in churches and other public buildings. In New England, and probably in Pennsylvania also, church people endured much discomfort from cold during the services in winter. Early in history, dogs warmed the feet in church. So did heated stones and bricks and foot stoves of various designs and sizes.⁴⁹

One drawback to the Franklin and Stiegel stoves was that they were not adaptable to burning anthracite. Here was a challenge to inventive minds. Much experimentation went on; and as early as 1803 Oliver Evans, a well-known Philadelphia inventor of his time, had certified that having experienced the use of Lehigh coal in a closed stove and also in a fireplace, he found anthracite to produce "a greater degree of heat than any other coal that I am acquainted with."⁵⁰

In May, 1805, Frederick Graff, clerk of the Philadelphia water works, reported that having "made a trial of the Lehigh coal some

time in the year 1802 at the Pennsylvania Bank in the large stove," he had found it "to answer that purpose exceedingly well."⁵¹

In 1805 Dr. James Woodhouse, professor of chemistry at the University of Pennsylvania, conducted the first scientific experiments with anthracite. His findings were published in the *Philadelphia Medical Museum* and reprinted in Dr. James Mease's book, *Geological Account of the United States* (Philadelphia, 1807). Essentially this was a test between Virginia bituminous, then being burned in Philadelphia, and anthracite. Dr. Woodhouse found that hard coal was superior to soft coal but it required a stove with a forced draft of air.⁵²

One year later—on February 11, 1808—in Fell Tavern, Wilkes-Barre, Judge Jesse Fell upset Dr. Woodhouse's finding by demonstrating that anthracite would burn in a grate without the use of an air blast. Judge Fell had conceived the idea that all that was necessary was a natural air current set in motion by heat from the fire itself. This revolutionary concept created a sensation in the Wyoming Valley, and the news was not long in reaching Philadelphia. This successful experiment, still celebrated each year, proved that there was a future domestic market for anthracite. The incident has inspired much prose and poetry and occupies a conspicuous place in the folklore of the industry. Many accounts of the event have come down through the generations by oral means. One tradition holds that Judge Fell, to avoid the ridicule of skeptical neighbors, carried on his experiments in his tavern at night.

Another tradition states that there was a trial experiment in the tavern's washroom. Here Fell and his son-in-law, Solomon Johnson, a blacksmith, piled kindling on top of the coal and left the room. "Sometime afterward it was noticed through the windows that the room was all aglow, whereupon opening the door, they observed the glory of the first grate of burning anthracite coal." Judge Fell's own version was noted on the flyleaf of a book: "Made the experiment of burning the common stone coal of the valley in a grate, in a common fireplace in my house, and find it will answer the purpose of fuel, making a clearer and better fire, at less expense, than burning wood in the common way."⁵³

Josiah White realized early that to capture the Philadelphia market and those of New York and New England many grates and stoves would have to be made, and so he gave every encouragement to manufacturers, singling out one of the pioneers for his good work:

". . . and of grate makers, Jacob F. Walter took quite a leading part."⁵⁴

The first anthracite stove on the market was the Lehigh stove, cast at the Mary Ann Furnace in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, in 1820. Reuben Trexler was the operator. The stove contained many improvements on which Trexler's father-in-law, Jacob Lasher, had been working for many years. The Mary Ann continued turning out anthracite stoves until 1859 when it bowed out, unable to stand the gaff of competition from stove manufacturers in Reading and other eastern Pennsylvania cities.⁵⁵

Around 1820 Josiah White sent some anthracite to Rev. Eliphalet Nott of Schenectady, New York, with the suggestion that he try building a stove for hard coal. President of Union College, minister, orator, and Prohibitionist, Dr. Nott simultaneously was one of the country's outstanding combustion experts. Though he began experimenting on a coal stove promptly, many years went by before he could make a satisfactory one. His first patent, issued in 1826, was for a "rotary grate and floor for burning anthracite." Two years later he obtained a patent for an "improvement for rendering combustion more uniform and more intense" In 1833 he received eleven patents on various improvements. Altogether he patented some thirty types of stoves, as his corporation, H. Nott and Company, expanded into the country's largest stove manufacturer.⁵⁶

Professor Walter R. Johnson of the Franklin Institute adapted hard coal to the air furnace in 1825, and this marked the beginning of central heating in homes and public buildings.⁵⁷

The people of Philadelphia who installed stoves, grates, and furnaces for heating did not have to wait long for kitchen fixtures which burned anthracite. Many cooking grates and stoves were on the market before 1830.

In Proper Philadelphia, of all places, a crude, unclean, and untried product of nature like anthracite needed, above all, respectability. The common people would take to hard coal soon enough once the fashionable people of the city adopted it. Being a Proper Philadelphian himself, Josiah White saw the value in such an appeal.

He and his partner, Erskine Hazard, engaged in a program of public relations in which they were pioneers. They used not only the Philadelphia newspapers but other media, including word-of-mouth communication. The line laid down ran something like this: Stone coal is here to stay; the supply is plentiful and is likely to remain

that way now that the Lehigh River has been made into a dependable artery of commerce; the price is reasonable; at last it is prudent to invest in a wrought-iron grate for one's parlor, and to substitute new cook stoves burning anthracite for the old-fashioned ten-plate wood stoves; no smoke or bad odor; the coal need not smudge one's hands—let the hired servants handle the coal and fires.

Wealthy and fashionable families installed elaborate grates which burned anthracite, but servants had to be won over to them. Being accustomed to firing up wood stoves, they did not like the innovation at first. "From the lack of bitumen in the coal," observes an early historian of the anthracite industry, "servants were remarkably slow in getting initiated into the *modus operandi* of making a Coal-fire; among the catalogue of the essential qualities for a servant was placed at the head that of being able to 'kindle and manage a Coal-fire.'" ⁵⁸

Unique feature of the promotional campaign were so-called "sample fires." In his Philadelphia home and office, Josiah White had grates burning anthracite, which the public was invited to observe. Many socially prominent families were persuaded to exhibit sample fires. Dr. Thomas C. James, professor of obstetrics at the University of Pennsylvania Medical School, the same physician who figured in the Philip Ginder legend, was among them. The demonstration fires were described as "patriotic." Perhaps, the word "fashionable" would have been more precise. Wrote White: "Several patriotic ladies exhibited their sample fires; among them the widow Guest in Sansom Street stood the most conspicuous." ⁵⁹

In 1824 Josiah White decided to put his good-will campaign to the acid test. Against vigorous opposition from his Philadelphia managers and coal dealers, but with the concurrence of his ever-faithful partner, Erskine Hazard, White sent what then appeared to be an "enormous" shipment of more than 9,541 tons of stone coal to Philadelphia. To the surprise of everyone but himself and Hazard, every ton of that cargo found a customer at a profitable rate.

Acceptance at last! Anthracite no longer was "stone" coal. It was a synonym for hard coal, soon to become a staple in the fuel market.

"This winter [1824-25]," wrote Josiah White to his stockholders, "may be considered quite the turning point in the use of anthracite." ⁶⁰

OVER THE BLUE MOUNTAIN

No more the echoes by stream and glade
 Reply to the song of the Indian maid,
 For Hunkee Punkee's battles are o'er
 And never again by the peaceful shore
 Will his dusky followers rally:

Brave and maiden have passed away,
 Like the fleecy cloud of a summer's day;
 Now the echoes reply to the dinner horn
 And we have no Indian, but Indian corn,
 For the Dutch have taken the valley.

—J. W. Alder, "*Indian Legend*"*

For the Dutch have taken the valley. CLEVER LINE. IT CAPTURES the pioneer era when pre-Revolutionary Pennsylvania Germans left Berks and other old counties to try their fortunes in the trackless wilderness north of the Blue Mountain, Pennsylvania Dutchland's historic barrier. They settled in Luzerne, Schuylkill, and other anthracite counties, and made their contributions to the anthracite industry as they had to agriculture.

For the Dutch have taken the valley. Catawissa is the specific valley the poet had in mind. It is the valley of Catawissa Creek that flows

* *History of Columbia and Montour Counties, Pennsylvania* (Chicago, 1887), p. 273.

into the Susquehanna River from its source in the anthracite region; a valley of rustic charm, wild gorges and mountain precipices contrasted with somber, bleak coal mine patches.

The valley in early times made a good setting for an Indian legend about a fierce old Delaware Indian chieftain who ruled his tribe with an iron hand—

Over the mountains, barren and bleak,
From Nescopeck's dark and frowning peak,
Across to the Chillisquaque Creek,
His warriors used to rally.

The chief's beautiful daughter, Minnetunkie, fell in love with a youthful brave whom her father did not favor. Consequently, the lovers met at a secret trysting place:

On a jutting cliff of the mountain's side,
But at dizzy height o'er the foaming tide—
Above, the gemmed vault of the summer night,
And below them, the gleam of the waters bright—
Sat the forest maid and her lover.

On those secluded heights one evening, the outraged chieftain surprised them. The young lover met his angry glare with defiance, but one twang of the father's bow sent a poisoned arrow through his heart, and over the cliff he fell, into the creek below. The brokenhearted Minnetunkie did not shed a tear, did not utter a word. Nor did she heed her father's order to return to her mother's wigwam "to learn her duty there." Instead, she leaped from the "jutting cliff" after her murdered lover.¹

Local folklore identifies the "jutting cliff" as the rocks overhanging Catawissa Creek at a place once known as Zion's Grove Mills belonging to Jacob Breisch, an early settler.² Zion's Grove, Schuylkill County, is only a short distance from Lindenmuth's Corner, near Ringtown, in the same county, the burial place of Colonel John Michael Lindenmuth, a Revolutionary War hero and the valley's most colorful and distinguished settler. An immigrant from his native Germany, Colonel Lindenmuth was a soldier in the French and Indian War as well as in the Revolutionary War, and saw plenty of action in both. Between battles he made his home in Berks County. On May 10, 1791, he settled on the banks of Catawissa Creek near Ringtown. Among his neighbors were Frederick Loewenberg who lived in the vicinity of Ringtown Station, Jacob Zimmerman, John Fuhrman, George Focht, Thomas Gottschalk, and Jacob Miller.

Colonel Lindenmuth's numerous descendants (he was the father of sixteen children by two wives), some scattered across the country, some still living in the Catawissa Valley, have erected a monument to his memory, and on that spot he lies buried.³

HAZLETON AND THE EASTERN MIDDLE FIELD

Catawissa Creek marks the western boundary of the anthracite region's Eastern Middle Field, encompassing the scattered coal lands and collieries in lower Luzerne County and upper Carbon and Schuylkill Counties with Hazleton as their center.⁴

In this area the Pennsylvania Dutch were the first settlers, whose arrival is marked by the tragic Sugarloaf massacre of September 11, 1780. Neither the Wyoming massacre of 1778, which shocked the young nation, nor General John Sullivan's big march of reprisal into New York State's Tory-and-Indian Genesee country, deterred Sir John Johnson's bands of Tories and Indians from continuing their murderous and devastating raids on the defenseless outposts along the Susquehanna River.⁵ Time after time harassed Susquehanna frontier patriots had to fall back on the settlers of the Lehigh Valley, and invariably they found these people dependable, hospitable, and loyal to the cause of American Independence.

The Tory-Indian forays might have come with less frequency had it not been for the effective espionage that Sir John maintained through secret British sympathizers living among the patriots. One settlement in Butler Valley, near the Susquehanna, was under suspicion of harboring a nest of these spies. To flush them out, and to arrest active Tories farther north, a detachment of forty-one patriots of Captain Van Etten's company of militiamen from the lower Lehigh Valley marched from Stroudsburg. Its commanding officer, Captain Daniel Klader, and most of his detachment were Pennsylvania Germans.

The force, using a road built by the Moravian Church, made good time as far as the former Moravian mission site at Lehighton, but after that point the going was rough. Crossing Broad Mountain, the soldiers cut their way through tangled, almost impenetrable undergrowth, and along the Upper Hazle Creek they encountered close hazel thickets. They finally reached what is now Hazleton, climbed

Buck Mountain, where they picked up an old Indian path leading past the toll house which stood where the now-abandoned Wilkes-Barre and Hazleton Railway crossed the old Hazleton — Conyngham road. Descending a ravine they came to Nescopeck Creek. Following its course they arrived at an open field, the only one in that primeval forest, which certainly was cause for joy after their long, torturous march. However, the thickets of bushes and trees densely overgrown with grapevines cut off their view, and this was dangerous in Indian country.

But on that bright noon of September 11, 1780, they were so tired and hungry they did not seem to care. The unsuspecting soldiers "unslung their knapsacks, stacked some of their guns, leaned others against trees or rocks, and even laid some flat on the ground. Some of the men gave themselves up to sport and play, some were cleaning the dirt and pebbles out of their shoes, some lay upon the ground smoking their pipes, some were eating their meal, and some had gone for wild grapes and had even climbed trees for the fruit. The whole band was in a state of unsuspecting relaxation."⁶

While they were relaxing, Tories and Indians, well armed and in full war paint, were lying in wait for them. With the suddenness of a midsummer thunderclap, a volley of musketry, accompanied by a bloodcurdling Indian war whoop, broke the silence as the savage foe overwhelmed the patriot soldiers. Gaining the initiative through surprise, the Indians and their Tory confederates snatched the idle patriot guns. Thus placed at a disadvantage, Captain Klader and his detachment fought only with their sidearms as weapons, but they fought courageously. The captain himself accounted for at least four redskins, it is said. He was finally slain and scalped, after suffering fiendish torture. Twenty-two of the detachment's forty-one men escaped and finally reached home. As for the rest, they were either taken prisoner or, like Captain Klader and his brother, Abraham, were mercilessly killed.

The number of the enemy's casualties was not known because they carried their dead from the field. However we do know that Roland Montour, French half-breed and a Seneca chief who shared leadership of the murderous band with a British Army officer, Lieutenant William Johnston, died from his wounds one week after the battle.

As soon as word of the Sugarloaf massacre reached the Lehigh Valley, Lieutenant Colonel Stephen Balliet raised a force of 150 volunteers willing to "undergo the fatigue and danger" of going to the

scene of the massacre to bury the heroic dead. Upon arrival on the 17th, they found that ten of their compatriots had been "scalped, stripped naked, and in a most cruel and barbarous manner—toma-hawked, their throats cut, etc., etc."⁷ The mutilated and decomposed bodies were rolled on to improvised stretchers and lowered tenderly and prayerfully into prepared graves.

Illness in the family had prevented John Balliet, a brother of Lieutenant Colonel Stephen Balliet, from accompanying the burial party to the scene of the Sugarloaf massacre. However, he listened eagerly to the stories brought back by returning militiamen. Their glowing reports of picturesque Butler Valley and its fertile soil fired his imagination.

In 1784 Balliet, his wife, and their two small children set out for Butler Valley on horseback. The children were placed "one in each of two beegums, which, strapped together, were slung over the back of a horse. In descending Broad Mountain the connecting strap broke and the beegums with their human treasure fell down the mountainside."⁸

John Balliet and family "settled at a spring, headwaters of the Little Nescopeck, in the upper end of the valley, at a place later known as Beisel's, about one mile west of Drums."⁹ His first home consisted of poles set up against a tree. Later he built a log house which, razed by fire, was replaced by a frame house, the first in the valley. Thus John Balliet, a Pennsylvania Dutchman, was Butler Valley's first white settler.¹⁰

The virgin lands of lower Luzerne County lured other adventurous Lehigh Valley families. In 1785, one year after John Balliet's arrival in Butler Valley, a group of Pennsylvania Dutch pioneers settled in Dorrance Township. In 1791 Jacob Smithers, Jacob Shovers, Martin Arner, and Jack Seyberling took up tracts on the banks of Nescopeck Creek near its mouth in Nescopeck Township.

Sugarloaf Township's first settler was George Easterday¹¹, and soon he was followed by Christian Miller, Anthony Weaver, Jacob Rittenhouse, and Jacob Drumheller, Sr., all from Northampton County. By 1810 there were sixty-seven taxables in Sugarloaf Township. Every able-bodied young man was given an opportunity to work off some of his taxes on township roads. The road supervisors changed from time to time. In 1810 Michael Bislone held this office. He kept his record on a double sheet of coarse paper in the calligraphy of the period, and spelled names (mostly German) and English words

according to their sounds. The results may well be imagined. An idea of his spelling is conveyed by this heading above his report: "Work tone on the roth—gretit—Received" (Work Done on the Road—Credit Received).¹²

The flow of settlers from the Lehigh Valley into lower Luzerne County developed into a flood as soon as the Lehigh and Susquehanna Turnpike was opened to traffic in 1805. Commonly known as the Berwick Pike, this grand old highway was an important factor in the development of Hazleton and its neighboring valleys into one large Pennsylvania Dutch province having a common culture and spoken language—Dutch.

Homeseekers from as far down the Lehigh Valley as Easton and Bethlehem came by way of the Pike, using horses, wagons, or stage-coaches, and passing through Beaver Meadow, Hazleton, Conyngham, Wapwallopen, and Nescopeck. The Pike ran through the main streets of all these towns, and the unusual width of Broad Street in Hazleton is attributed to the fact that the Pike, of which it was a part, had been surveyed at a one hundred-foot width. Hazleton's first white settler, Jacob Drumheller, had a stagecoach stand on the north side of Broad Street, below Hazle, in 1809.

Although the highest city in Pennsylvania, Hazleton was marshy in early times, and was called the "Great Swamp" by Indians and Moravian missionaries. The German settlers knew it as *Haselschwamm* because of the abundance of hazel bushes in the swamp. The misspelling of the city's name (it should be spelled "Hazelton") is attributed to the mistake made by a clerk in Harrisburg in transcribing the city charter.¹³

The Berwick Pike was lined not only with farms and farmhouses, but also with grist, saw, carding and fulling mills, as well as blacksmiths' and shoemakers' shops, general stores, and taverns catering to travelers.

Some church buildings, the first made of logs, also faced the Berwick Pike; the pioneers of Nescopeck village had to walk four miles to their union church. Lower Luzerne County's first German settlers were either Lutherans or German Reformed. Customarily, members of both the Lutheran and German Reformed congregations built a union church together and worshiped there on alternate Sundays. Butler Valley's oldest congregation today is St. John's Reformed, at St. John's, which was organized on December 26, 1799.¹⁴

The traditional discoverer hero in the Eastern Middle Field is

John Charles Fitzgerald, commonly known as John Charles, a Conyngham blacksmith. In 1826 he was hunting groundhogs near the present town of Cranberry when he was attracted to what he thought was a groundhog hole. Laying down his gun, he reached far down into the hole for the traditional weather prophet, but instead of coming up with a groundhog, his big blacksmith's hand clutched a lump of anthracite. From then on that location has been known in local tradition as the "Old Hazleton Opening." Successful explorations led to the forming of the Hazleton Coal Company, the city's first, which was incorporated in 1836.¹⁵

There were more than thirty major mining operations in the Eastern Middle Field before the Civil War. Pennsylvania Dutch farmers shared honors with Welsh, Irish, English, Scottish, French, and German immigrants in being among the first workers employed in Hazleton-area coal mines. Some of the Pennsylvania Dutch were miners working at the face, some were colliery carpenters, blacksmiths, machinists, company store clerks, and bosses of one kind or another. In the beginning they worked in the mines and continued living on their farms. In time they broke with tradition and moved into Hazleton proper or to one or another of the towns growing up around the city. Many intermarried with other ethnic groups.

Hazleton's population has a pronounced German flavor. Many of its families are descendants of first Pennsylvania Dutch settlers, of German immigrants who came in 1846 and in the wake of the 1848 German revolution, and of subsequent waves of German immigrants. The city's very first church was German—Grace Reformed—erected and dedicated at Broad and Cedar Streets on April 17, 1847.

Wealthy German refugees from the 1848 revolution founded Tresckow, near Hazleton, in 1851. Operating under the name of the German Pennsylvania Coal Company, they sank a slope, built a brick company store, a tavern, a coal breaker, and some company houses for miners. Tresckow was commonly known as "Dutchtown," yet most of its early miners were Irish immigrants, including Hugh Boyle, whose son, the late James S. Boyle, gained fame as a poet.

The German Pennsylvania Coal Company was in business only a few years when it sold out to Samuel Bonnell, Jr., of New York, and ultimately the property passed to the Glen Alden Coal Company.¹⁶

The Eastern Middle Field's earliest coal operators were chiefly Pennsylvania Dutch, Philadelphia Quakers, French, English, and Welsh. Foremost among the pioneers in the field was Ario Pardee,

born in New York State of French Huguenot—New England stock. In 1838, while still in his twenties, he gave up a lucrative career as a railroad builder to enter the pioneer anthracite industry. First under the name of Pardee, Miner and Hunt, and later as A. Pardee and Company, he dominated the industry in the Eastern Middle Field for more than half a century, and earned a national reputation as a philanthropist.

Eckley B. Coxe, operating as Coxe Brothers Company, was another leading coal man; and Drifton, one of the most important collieries, was his particular domain. His company built the first miners' hospital and maintained it. His wife, Sophie, was widely known as "The Angel of the hard coal fields" . . . because of her philanthropic activities.

Among Pennsylvania Dutch coal operators, M. S. Kemmerer and Company was first at Sandy Run and Pond Creek; J. S. Wentz and Company, at Hazle Brook; and Lewis Rothermel, at the Gowen Colliery in the West End.

The Leisenring family, whose forebears had come from Germany, and who settled in Mauch Chunk in 1828, was also active in this field. E. B. Leisenring and Company was the first to operate the Audenried colliery. The Upper Lehigh tract of coal land was preempted by Thaddeus Stevens, historic anti-slavery Congressman, and sold by him to Judge John Leisenring for a small amount of money; the Upper Lehigh Coal Company, controlled by the Leisenring family, operated the property. The Leisenrings' biggest operation, however, was at Eckley, Luzerne County, where the J. Leisenring Company was in charge.¹⁷

The "J" in the J. Leisenring Company's name stood for John, one of the anthracite industry's pioneer wonder boys. He spent his youth in and around Mauch Chunk at the time when Josiah White, operating head of the Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company, and Edwin A. Douglas, the Old Company's first engineer, were solving their colossal engineering problems; and from them he learned civil engineering. At seventeen, John Leisenring was made manager of one of the Old Company's canal-railroad divisions, and at thirty-one, upon Douglas's death, he became manager of the entire company. Two years later he moved into Josiah White's spacious Mauch Chunk mansion, "Whitehall." As manager, Leisenring directed many intricate and challenging engineering projects, for which he was richly rewarded. At the height of his career he resigned from the company

to devote full time to his own investments, including those in the Eastern Middle Field. When he died at the turn of the century he had amassed a vast fortune.¹⁸

Hazleton's most colorful and dynamic Pennsylvania Dutch coal operators were George Bushar Markle and his son, John. They were descendants of John Christian Markle, a native of Alsace-on-the-Rhine, Germany. The first Markle to emigrate to America, he settled at Moselem Springs, Berks County, in 1703.

George B. Markle was born in Milton, Northumberland County, on July 1, 1827. At fourteen he became a carpenter's apprentice; later he mastered his father's trade, that of saddler. Neither trade appealed to him particularly, however, and he decided to try his fortune in the new coal fields opening around Hazleton. That was in 1848. He was then twenty-one, earning fifty dollars a month, and recently married. His first job was as a clerk in the Hazleton company store of A. Pardee and Company. He advanced to bookkeeper, to store manager, and finally, to general manager of all the company's collieries. His phenomenal record with Pardee won him an attractive offer from the Union Improvement Company in 1857 to develop their Jeddo and Highland coal lands on virtually his own terms. To take advantage of this great opportunity, he formed the G. B. Markle and Company, of which he became the senior partner. Although only thirty, he had already formed original ideas as to how to revolutionize the anthracite industry.

His first concern was for the breaker where the raw coal was processed. Despite improvements over the primitive methods of the original pioneers, breakers were still inefficient in design and faulty in operation, becoming bottlenecks to production. George B. Markle designed a new type of building in which to prepare his coal, but his carpenters could not read his plans—any plans. He solved the problem by whittling a miniature breaker out of wood with his penknife. Three feet tall, perfect in proportion, with every piece of timber in place, the model was just the thing for the carpenters to use in building the kind of breaker G. B. had in mind. When it had served its purpose, the model was given to the Markle children to play with—and it went the way of all toys. Markle did not patent his design, nor did he take out any patents on breaker mechanical devices which he later invented. He regarded them as contributions to the progress of the anthracite industry. Many called him "Father of the Coal Breaker."

Another problem confronting him was how to make better pumps to diminish the quantity of excess water in his mines.¹⁹ After many experiments he invented a double four-cylinder bronze pump of much greater capacity and durability than the ones then on the market. As for his other inventions, he did not patent them, and automatically his designs passed into the public domain.

George B. Markle's invention of the pump represented a great achievement, but the achievement of his son, John, in the same field was even greater. In one master stroke, he eliminated altogether the need for pumps in the Markle mines. His answer to underground floods was the Jeddo drainage tunnel, which was hailed as one of the engineering marvels of its period. The way he built it in the face of insurmountable obstacles is part of the industry's folklore.

Charles Schwab once said of John Markle that he spent a lifetime trying to be a rough fellow. This was hard to believe because J. M. had been reared in a refined home, amid a religious atmosphere, and unlike his father and many nineteenth-century industrial magnates, he had had the advantage of a college education. But there he was: blunt, gruff, abrupt, salt-and-peppering his speech with "hell," "damn," and other cuss words. He might greet a stranger calling on him, as he once greeted a *New York World* reporter, with, "Well, who in hell are you?" He smoked fat cigars of the finest and costliest Cuban tobacco, and would stuff his desks with boxes of cigars representing the best brands obtainable.

But John Markle was not all rough-and-ready even though he liked to appear that way. Once he attended a luncheon of New York Union League Club trustees to discuss plans for raising \$100,000 for a Salvation Army dormitory. When the Salvation Army officers told how hard they had prayed for this rescue mission, John Markle got up to announce there was no need for a drive. He had decided to contribute the entire \$100,000. Asked later by a newspaper reporter why he had made this dramatic move, his answer was, "I came from a devout Christian home."²⁰ The John and Mary R. Markle Foundation, which he created and endowed in 1927, is another example of his philanthropy.²¹

He prided himself on his independence, calling himself an independent coal operator. When John Mitchell and his United Mine Workers of America entered the anthracite region at the turn of the century, John Markle's independence was threatened, and he reacted

accordingly. Considering the feudalism that then existed in the industry, his relationship with his own several thousand miners was good. They respected him. In 1900 John Markle was conciliatory, probably because he believed his employees would stick by him. But in the famous 1902 strike, when they joined the strikers, he promptly evicted them from his company houses.²² After the strike he moved to New York—for good. This, in brief, was John Markle, builder of the Jeddo drainage tunnel.

Educated as a mining engineer at Lafayette College, Markle also learned the practical side of coal mining in his father's mines during summer vacations. When his father suddenly retired because of illness, the son, John, stepped into his shoes as the big boss of G. B. Markle and Company. That was in 1880, the year he was graduated from Lafayette. He was only twenty-one.

Even at that young age he was prepared for his tremendous responsibilities. From his first day on the job to the time he sold the Jeddo Highland Coal Company, successor to G. B. Markle and Company, in 1926—a span of forty-six years—John Markle thought and acted boldly and independently. When he conceived the idea of a Jeddo drainage tunnel, older and more experienced heads tried to dissuade him from it because they thought it was too big for him, and too fantastic a project anyway. But he, the youngest and most determined coal operator in the region, was not deterred.

The Harleigh and Ebervale mines had been abandoned in 1886 when they became waterlogged in one of the worst floods in anthracite history. Mining engineers estimated that the mines contained 500,000,000 gallons of water. To pump this water out, they said, at fifty-one cents a gallon, would cost approximately \$250,000,000. Obviously this was uneconomical.

John Markle, still unconvinced, went ahead with his own ideas. One day in 1889 he quietly bought the Harleigh property outright, and took a thirty-year lease on the Ebervale colliery from the Union Improvement Company. Then he announced that he had no intentions of pumping the water out of these mines. He planned *to drain it out through a tunnel five miles long underneath the mines, emptying it into Nescopeck Creek in Butler Valley*. He also made it known that this tunnel would be extended to the Jeddo mines so that all the Markle-controlled properties would be freed forever from the menace of floods.

Following many months of the most careful surveying, sighting,

and marking, all of it resulting in precise calculations, the actual digging began in 1891. Two crews of men working under a contractor, but with John Markle acting as his own mining engineer and boss, started simultaneously from opposite ends of the site. One crew drilled underneath the flooded Ebervale mine, while the other worked from Butler Valley three miles away. Between them was Broad Mountain, a barrier of solid granite and hard red shale. The two crews not only had to meet after the last wall had fallen, but the floors of the tunnel's two sections had to be exactly on the same level to enable the water to flow through. The slightest engineering inaccuracy might have left the tunnel useless. It certainly would have made young John Markle the laughing stock of the industry.

However, after four and a half years of drilling, picking, and shoveling in stygian darkness seven hundred feet below the surface, the two working crews finally did meet. When the last barrier had been blasted away one summer day in 1895, the two sections of the tunnel meshed into one continuous tube. The difference in their levels was *less than one inch*. It was as if two adjoining rooms of equal dimensions had been thrown into one by the removal of a particular partition.

By draining Harleigh and Ebervale mines of their stagnant water, John Markle reclaimed an immense fortune in premium-grade anthracite and at a cost *not* of \$250,000,000, which pumping would have required, *but of only one million dollars*. Furthermore, though several hundred men were engaged on the project for more than four years, working under extremely hazardous conditions, there was not a single recorded accident. And what pleased Markle especially was that, with the Harleigh and Ebervale collieries producing again, jobs were created for several hundred miners, and the ghost towns around the collieries came back to life once more.²³

SHAMOKIN AND THE WESTERN MIDDLE COAL FIELD

Echoes of Indian war whoops gave ominous warning of the presence in the Shamokin Valley of another savage raiding party bent on murder and pillage. Members of the Cherry family nervously gathered their bed clothes, tied them on the family cow, and escaped to Fort Augusta at the forks of the Susquehanna River, where Sunbury now

stands.²⁴ The Cherrys were the first white settlers around Shamokin. Their log house stood about a mile east of the present borough limits, along the Mount Carmel road. Abraham Cherry's sawmill, first in the area, was on Shamokin Creek, across from the present Cameron breaker.

Around 1780, this same Abraham Cherry is believed to have examined some pieces of anthracite which he had found in the bottom of the creek. Regarding them as stones, he threw them back into the water, and went about his business.²⁵

Significant historical event of pre-Revolutionary central Pennsylvania was the "New Purchase," the name given to a sprawling territory purchased by Thomas and Richard Penn, the province's proprietors, from the Six Nations on November 5, 1768. This gloomy forest of hardwoods, hemlock, and towering pines, unbroken except for brawling mountain streams, an occasional meadow, or a clearing where an Indian village had once stood, and drained by the West Branch and North Branch of the majestic Susquehanna River, was quite extensive—from the New York State line on the north to a line that is now the southeastern boundary of Northumberland County, and from Luzerne County's eastern border to Lycoming Creek on the west.²⁶

In April, 1769, a land office was opened to receive applications for land from prospective settlers. The price was only five pounds sterling for one hundred acres. This was so cheap that within several months the number of applications reached some four thousand, most of them from Lancaster and Berks Counties:

From Lancaster County the Scotch-Irish moved into the territory bordering the West Branch [of the Susquehanna River], from the North Branch [northward] to the Muncy hills and beyond to Lycoming Creek, the line of purchase. Some of them moved up the North Branch to Fishing Creek, Berwick, and the western section of what is now Luzerne County until they came in conflict with the Connecticut settlers, who had located at Wyoming [in the vicinity of Wilkes-Barre.]

Into the southern part of the county flowed the Dutch from the neighboring county of Berks.²⁷

When Northumberland County was established in 1772, it extended from the New York state line on the north to the Mahantongo Creek on the south, and from the headwaters of the Lehigh River on the east to as far west as Lake Erie. From time to time through the

years, twenty-six new counties were carved from Northumberland, leaving it a mere geographical fragment in the shape of a rocking chair. Only its southern boundary, including the Mahantongo Valley, remained unchanged.

Since pioneer days, the Mahantongo Valley has been Pennsylvania Dutch territory. From one generation to another, the Dutch have held fast to family farms and to traditional ways, so that today "the culture pattern of the valley is still Pennsylvania Dutch."²⁸

Settled first was the lower part, which is drained by the Schwaben and Big Mahantongo Creeks. Some of the pioneers came there directly from the boats in Philadelphia that had brought them from their native Germany. Other German pioneers migrated from Berks, Lancaster, and Northampton Counties to carve new homes on the new frontier. The upper part of Mahantongo Valley was settled by Germans who had fought in the Revolutionary War.²⁹

Pennsylvania Dutch migrants took over not only the Mahantongo Valley, but the southern part of the county where the anthracite was concentrated. Jacob Gearhart, an officer in the war, moved into Rush Township and built himself a log house on the banks of the Susquehanna. By 1778 N. Brosius had a gristmill along Stony Valley Creek. Jacob Snyder brought his large family, cut a road through the wilderness, and developed a fine, productive farm about half a mile from the present Snyderstown, which was named in his honor.³⁰

And then there was Frederick William Kauman, another eighteenth-century German settler, with a touch of *Eileschpiggel*³¹ about him. Born in Nasa, Germany, on June 8, 1760, according to the record in his family Bible, Kauman had come to America in 1772 as an indentured servant. He was sold to George Sell, a farmer near Kutztown, Berks County, for seven years to pay for his ship's passage, his debt amounting to twelve pounds sterling. A condition of the bill of sale was that "the said George Sell was bound to give him his board, lodging, and apparel, and have him taught to read and write, [and] at the end of the term to give him two suits of clothes, one of which must be new, besides twelve pounds in money."

In 1779, when he had served his term of indenture, Kauman trekked to the southern part of Northumberland County. Sell must have been a good master, for Kauman not only had money with which to buy farmland, but also had received good training. He soon earned a reputation as a competent farmer, a shrewd bargainer, and a man of austere living.

It was his austerity that first aroused his neighbors' suspicions. "Here is Fritz Kauman," they would say in the Pennsylvania Dutch dialect. "He raises good crops and sells them, too, but one never sees him spending any money." As he grew older, Fritz Kauman seemed to become more eccentric, at least that is what his neighbors thought. For instance, he owned twelve clocks, all of them ticking away simultaneously, and keeping correct time. Whether in a joke or not, Kauman was overheard to say that after death he would peep through a certain window in his house when the sheriff was putting up his personal property for public sale, to make sure that his estate received every penny it was entitled to. He was a very old man when he made that boast. Even in old age it was his custom to work in the fields bareheaded and barefooted. He could cradle, bind, and shock fourteen sheaves of rye by himself, and only a year before his death he cultivated and dug his own potato crop. What a man!

Fritz Kauman died in his 108th year—on August 1, 1867. His mind was clear to the last. As proof of this, neighbors would cite the fact that it was he, and not the preacher, who selected the text for the funeral sermon, from Job 6:13—"Is not my help in me? And is wisdom quite driven from me?"

The first night after the funeral, several young bucks dug up Old Fritz's garden in search of his rumored hoard of gold. They dug deep until their shovels rang from contact with a hard substance. Not gold, but something worth gold, was the reward for their labor, for they had unearthed a vein of anthracite.³²

The traditional discovery hero in this, the Western Middle Coal Field, is Isaac Tomlinson who, in 1790, found some "black stones" in the bed of Quaker Run, a stream crossing his farm near what is now Kulpmont. More curious than Abraham Cherry, Tomlinson carried some samples to his native home in Maiden Creek Township, Berks County, where a blacksmith succeeded in burning them on his hearth fire. Some years later, Tomlinson became a blacksmith and used anthracite exclusively.³³

In 1814, a fifteen-year-old farm boy, Johnny Thompson, mined a two-horse wagonload of coal from an outcrop in Quaker Run, and hauled it to Sunbury where he sold it to a shoemaker for five dollars. This marked the first time Shamokin coal competed with Wilkes-Barre coal along the Susquehanna River, the shoemaker having previously been a customer of the up-river coal.³⁴

Shamokin's first commercial coal mine was John C. Boyd's "stone-coal quarry," as recollected in old age by Joseph Bird, who had worked in it as a boy, and whose father, Ziba Bird, had been its superintendent:

In 1826 John C. Boyd and my father built a dam in Shamokin Creek north of Webster Street, and opened a coal mine. The coal was mined from the bottom of the creek. The vein had been exposed some years before by action of the water. My father was a practical miner in the methods of that period. John Runkle wheeled the coal to the [creek] bank on a plank, assisted by myself, who was then a small boy. Casper Reed and Samuel Startzel were required to haul this coal from Shamokin to Boyd's place two miles above Danville, near the south shore of the Susquehanna River. The job of mining and hauling lasted several months. The coal was then loaded in arks and floated down the river to Columbia. This was the first Shamokin coal mined and sent to the outside market.³⁵

This pioneer coal mine occupied a piece of a tract originally surveyed and patented by Samuel Clark on April 11, 1776, upon which most of Shamokin now stands. Title to one-third of the tract frequently changed hands, and it was even sold for taxes. Finally it came into the possession of Walter Brady, a former sheriff of Northumberland County. Brady, living beyond his means, had gone into debt, and the land was offered for sale several times, without any bidders.

On August 19, 1824, the unwanted property was again put up at a sheriff's sale—to satisfy a debt of \$83.50. This was an incredible bargain considering that the land would some day be the site of the entire east section of Shamokin and include among its valuable real estate the borough hall, three bank buildings, two railroad stations, and many business places estimated in the 1930's to be worth nearly four million dollars.³⁶

A reputed horse thief, who was the only bidder, was able to pick up the title for a paltry twelve dollars:

Jesse Major was the purchaser. Major was a loose character; in fact, an outlaw. He had been accused at different times of robbery, horse-stealing, and counterfeiting, but managed generally to escape punishment. He was a wandering tailor and was very fleet of foot.

Every bad act that occurred in the neighborhood was attributed to him. Tradition says that at the time of sale, Major had just been released from jail, and in passing by, in a joke, made a bid of twelve dollars. There being no other bidders, the tract was knocked

down to him, amid considerable merriment, as the bystanders supposed he had no money. But to their surprise, he paid down the sum in gold. Coal was known to exist upon this tract for many years previously, but its value as a fuel was not fully known. Major visited his purchase several times, and obtained samples of stone coal in the creek between Clay and Webster streets.

It is said he took some of these pieces to a blacksmith at Paxinos and told him to try them. The smith placed some of the chunks upon the top of the hearth-fire (a charcoal one) but as they commenced to fly in small pieces as they became heated the coal was pronounced worthless. But Major did not lose confidence in his stone coal, and in his travels over the country exhibited his mineral specimens. His character, however, was so poor, that his coal and assertions received but little attention. Major was very anxious to obtain a horse and offered his "kingdom for a horse."

Finally, in the spring of 1826, he stopped one night at the tavern of Joseph Snyder who then kept a hotel at the "Liberty Pole." Here he exhibited his coal and offered to trade his tract (now the most beautiful part of Shamokin) to Mr. Snyder for an old gray horse. Mr. Snyder declined the offer but told Major to go and see John C. Boyd, who, he said, was fond of speculations. Major went to Boyd next and finally made a sale, Mr. Boyd having ascertained that there was coal on the premises. Mr. Boyd paid two hundred and thirty dollars for the property, and an old horse, valued at about fifty dollars, was part of the deal. The tract contained one hundred and six acres, eighty perches.³⁷

Unaware of the land's potential value, solid citizens of the frontier village enjoyed a hearty laugh at Jesse Major's expense. Only a fool like he, they held, would bid for a piece of land that was dark, dreary, and all but impenetrable, with a meandering mountain stream (later named Shamokin Creek) cutting through it, covered with patches of laurel, hemlock, and pine, and hemmed in by mountain spurs. A good place to hide in when in trouble—that was all it was good for, in the eyes of these frontiersmen.

Nevertheless, this was the site later selected for development as the metropolis of the Western Middle Coal Field. Its dismal landscape was overlooked by investors because of its central location in the great Shamokin coal basin, encompassing coal territory between the North and Mahanoy Mountains, eighteen miles long with an average width of two and a half miles. Some forty-five square miles of productive coal lands and the only outlets to the Susquehanna River were located here.³⁸

As a land speculator, John C. Boyd sold or exchanged the Major tract several times in the twelve years following his purchase. One

of those who owned it briefly was Jacob Graeff of Reading. In 1830 he conceived the idea of building a new town on the site, but before he could carry out his plan the tract was back in Boyd's hands. Graeff had showed the way, however, and now Boyd engaged Kimber Cleaver of Columbia County, noted engineer, to resurvey the plot with a view to developing it as a town. The survey was launched on March 1, 1835, and the same day two carpenters were put on the job building the first house at Shamokin and Commerce Streets.

When enough houses had been built, John C. Boyd took his place in local history as the founder of Shamokin. Originally, the place was called "Marion," but was later changed to Shamokin after the historic Indian village that once stood near the present site of Sunbury.

"The Shamokin coal region," reported the *Sunbury American* of September 12, 1840, "connected with Sunbury by a railroad twenty miles in length [the Danville and Pottsville Railroad], which a few years ago was solitary, wild, untrodden by the foot of man, save the solitary hunter in pursuit of game, is now teeming with a busy and industrious population. The town of Shamokin . . . contains about one hundred homes. It has sprung up as if by magic" In its September 19th issue, the newspaper, quoting the 1840 census, gave Shamokin's population as five hundred inhabitants.

Shamokin's five original citizens were: Ziba Bird, who was in charge of laying out the town; Joseph Snyder, first hotelkeeper, whose son, John Boyd Snyder, was, in 1835, the first child born there; Dr. Robert Philips, first physician; James Porter, first miner; and Jacob Mowry, first "boss miner."³⁹ Mowry, born near Danville about 1802, arrived in Shamokin in 1836. A man of amazing energy and drive, Mowry⁴⁰ was engaged by most of the individual and corporate coal-landowners to supervise the opening of mines in and around Shamokin, including the drifts that in later years became part of the great Cameron Colliery.

One of the early improvements in the Western Middle Coal Field was the building of the Danville and Pottsville Railroad, known as the "Girard Road," because one of its principal supporters was Stephen Girard, the Philadelphia financier, who owned extensive coal lands in the nearby Mahanoy Valley. Originally chartered in 1826, it was not until 1838 that it was extended to Shamokin. During the shipping season, two locomotives made two trips a day to Sunbury, hauling about forty loaded cars of coal.

About 1835 George Heckert, Lancaster lawyer, purchased the

celebrated Buck Ridge tract of 148 acres of anthracite lands, and soon after organized the Lancaster Company, which became one of the major operators in the field. Drifts were opened, miners' homes built, and a quarter-mile lateral railroad was constructed to connect the colliery with the Danville and Pottsville Railroad, a project under the supervision of Jacob Mowry, previously mentioned.

A Pennsylvania Dutchman, Christian Hautz, a native of Hummelstown, Dauphin County, changed Northumberland County's customary standard of value in land deals from timber to anthracite after his arrival from Union County in 1836. Specifically, from Samuel and Henry Meyers, Hautz purchased the fabulously rich John Brady tract on the basis of the old timber standard, paying for it only \$1,792 and an exchange of two farms in Union County.

The ink on these deeds had hardly dried when, on October 7, 1836, he entered into an agreement with the Reverend Dr. Robert McCartee of Port Carbon, Schuylkill County, whereby he conveyed to him 115 acres of the John Brady tract for 50 dollars an acre, or a sum of \$5,750.⁴¹

Warranted by the state to John Brady in 1793, this tract of more than four hundred acres contained most of the anthracite deposits of Cameron Colliery, which for more than a century has been in production at the gap where the Shamokin Creek breaks through North Mountain.

By handling the tract as a resource of anthracite rather than as so many acres of mountain timberland, Hautz made a fortune. Some parts he sold outright at a profit, some he mined himself, some he leased to small "boss miners," as coal operators were then called, who paid him a royalty on every ton they mined. James Porter, his first lessee, agreed to pay him at the rate of seventy-five cents a ton.⁴²

A study of the chain of titles reveals that title was held by many persons owning small shares of certain subdivisions. Through numerous transfers, all but twenty-five holdout acres of the John Brady tract eventually came into the possession of William Cameron, the "Stephen Girard of Central Pennsylvania." Title to the tract passed to a corporation for the first time on June 30, 1871, when Cameron conveyed it to the Shamokin Valley and Pottsville Railroad Company. Transferred from one corporation to another, it was finally leased by the Susquehanna Collieries Company to the Stevens Coal Company on June 1, 1932.⁴³

Shamokin continued to grow and progress until 1842 when it was suddenly gripped by a paralyzing depression. Virtually the whole town came to a halt, resulting in many failures, including that of the Danville and Pottsville Railroad. It might have become a ghost town, and perhaps even disappeared altogether, but for the courage, initiative, and determination of a pair of Pennsylvania Dutchmen—the Fagely brothers, William and Reuben. Sons of Christian Fagely, a farmer who had migrated from Maiden Creek Township, Berks County, the brothers were born in Shamokin Township, Northumberland County.

Familiarly known as “Uncle William,” and “Uncle Reuben,” the Fagelys were good business men. William, the elder brother, was the first to venture upon a business career. At an early age he opened a small store in Snufftown. From there he moved to Paxinos, where Reuben joined him. The brothers invaded Shamokin together in 1838. In the same year, William became Shamokin’s first postmaster, serving until 1844. In 1839 the Fagely boys opened one of the town’s first general stores, and prospered from the very beginning. Their store profits enabled them to branch out into the anthracite mining industry. Their first operation was a drift mine at the gap, which was known to pioneers as the “Sauerkraut Works.” Here, too, they prospered. Operating several mines, they were able to make larger coal shipments to Baltimore, Maryland, where they had established coal yards.

The Fagelys also went into railroad contracting, and did considerable work for the Danville and Pottsville Railroad. When the road failed in the depression, they were in a good position to step in and operate it. Making necessary repairs of the rolling stock, substituting horsepower for the locomotives, which were too heavy for the wooden rails, they hauled coal to Sunbury from mines that they had reopened.

The Fagelys were benefactors, but at a price, which was exacted from 1842 to 1852:

During this time, the Fagelys [sic] carried on nearly all the business of the town. They mined and shipped all the coal; they bought and sold the principal part of the goods; they furnished all the provisions and gave all the employment to labor. During the shipping season the men worked at the mines, or hauled the coal mined to Sunbury; while during the winter months they were sent into the woods to prepare material for the railroad, or else work on the repairs. Taxes and all debts were paid by orders on their store, and even the salaries of preachers and teachers were paid in

this manner. Not a marriage or funeral could take place, not a visit to another town could be made, without consent of Uncle William. Childbirth was said to be the only condition of humanity not under their control.

Candidates for office merely consulted with William and Reuben, and if they consented, the vote of the town was secured; and it is said sermons were shaped to meet their approval. At this time their power over the inhabitants was as great as the Emperor of Russia exercises over his subjects.

If a laborer did wrong he was sent to "Goss Hill," to work on a farm picking stones until his offense had been atoned, when he was permitted to work among his fellows again.

But it must be said for the Fegelys that, though they held absolute power over the people, they used it not altogether for their own advantage. Their people were always well supplied with provisions; there were no paupers; and in case of sickness, through the kindness of "Aunt Kitty," no one was allowed to want for what could be procured for their relief. Yes, years hence, when the selfish acts of men that were noised about with great *eclat* will be forgotten, the kind deeds of this good Samaritan towards the sick and dying will live green in remembrance of many a relieved one, and the name of "Aunt Kitty" will be called blessed.

During this period, all that had money had moved away, while those who were too poor to leave, worked for the Fegelys

A large number of persons who moved away went to Schuylkill County, where they remained until business revived, when they returned experienced in the work of coal. At this time, all the coal mined was hauled to Sunbury by horse-power, and during the shipping season about one hundred horses were used for this purpose. It required two days for the round trip. From four to five horses were required to take a train of ten cars. The coal was sold at Sunbury, or to the towns along the Susquehanna, and most generally exchanged for store-goods and provisions, which were brought back by the returning trains.

But this state of affairs could not last forever. The spirit of progress and speculation was abroad, and soon the old inhabitants of Shamokin were to have their dreams broken by the restless spirit of enterprise, armed with capital and labor.

Railroads were to be graded and laid with an iron rail, collieries were to be established with coal breakers, business was to be conducted on the cash system, and a general revolution take place in the method of transacting affairs.

But for many years afterwards, there were those who occasionally sighed for the return of the old times, when Uncle William and Uncle Reuben ruled the destinies of Shamokin.⁴⁴

By an ironic coincidence, it was another pair of Pennsylvania Dutch brothers who pulled Shamokin out of its doldrums, breathed life

into its moribund economy, and relieved the Fagely brothers of their paternalistic rule. They were Judge William I. Helfenstein and Charles P. Helfenstein of Lancaster, grandsons of the Reverend Conrad Helfenstein who had immigrated to the United States from Germany as a missionary of the German Reformed Church.

The Judge was the more colorful and aggressive of the two Helfenstein brothers. For a former theological student at Princeton, he proved himself a shrewd business man, a resourceful promoter, and a vigorous organizer. For a period of about ten years, beginning in 1849, Judge Helfenstein was identified with every movement to develop the Western Middle Coal Field as producer and shipper of anthracite, with Shamokin as its center. Actually, he led most of these movements.

While investing heavily of his own money, he realized that outside finance capital was required to realize his bold dreams of expansion in this field. Professor Henry D. Rogers' favorable report on the Shamokin coal basin's potential, part of his statewide geological survey,⁴⁵ was both timely and effective in supporting Judge Helfenstein's money-raising efforts. A flood of investment dollars from Lancaster, Philadelphia, New York, and other cities created a new climate. Now there was intensive industrial activity, business expansion, and a healthy growth in terms of population, jobs, and prosperity.

Specifically, Judge Helfenstein opened up the entire Western Middle Coal Field, from Mount Carmel to Trevorton, buying or leasing every tract of coal land that was available. Coal seams were proved, drifts opened, breakers built, miners' houses erected, and lateral railroads graded and constructed to connect new mines with shipping points. To accomplish all this, Judge Helfenstein must have kept the Northumberland County lawyers busy drawing up papers, for he organized many local companies—Zerbe Run, Big Mountain, Carbon Run, Green Ridge, Locust Gap, to name a few of which he was president.

Buying the bankrupt Danville and Pottsville Railroad at a sheriff's sale, he had its charter renewed under a new name, the Philadelphia and Sunbury Railroad, and substituted iron T-rails for the oak rails with iron straps. Powerful new locomotives displaced the old ones, with names having a strong Pennsylvania Dutch flavor—"David Longenecker," "Thomas Baumgardner," and "Lancaster," among others.

Nor did he overlook the urgent need for homes by the workers who would fill the hundreds of coal-mining and railroad jobs he was

creating—his fellow Pennsylvania Dutchmen and European Immigrants, many of them experienced miners—English, Welsh, Scottish, Irish, and German. He built the mining towns of West Shamokin, Gowen City, and Helfenstein, and was president of the company that laid out Mount Carmel.⁴⁶

Trevorton,⁴⁷ western outpost of the entire anthracite region, was another product of Judge Helfenstein's promotion. He and his financial associates had three principal purposes in mind when they acquired this stretch of wilderness: coal mining; the building of railroad yards, weigh scales, and repair shops of a new railroad, which they were to build to a Susquehanna River terminal point now called Hernden; and the development of an independent town of worker-owned homes for the men who would dig the coal and work for the railroad.

It was a day to be remembered in Trevorton history—May 28, 1850—when the lots, surveyed by Kimber Cleaver, were put up for public sale. A large crowd, drawn from Northumberland and neighboring counties, had assembled. The platform, built in a clearing of the wilderness, held prominent men, many of whom had a financial stake in Judge Helfenstein's dreams of expansion. Loud applause followed the public reading of letters from President Zachary Taylor, Vice-President Millard Fillmore, Henry Clay, and other national figures.

Sales were brisk because the lots could be bought on attractive terms. Prices ranged from twenty-five dollars to one hundred dollars a lot, to be paid for on the installment plan, and with no down payments required. Among the first purchasers were: Jacob Bader, Benjamin Troutman, John Knapp, John Galt, David Thomas, John Lynch, and Peter Quinn.⁴⁸

In keeping with the custom of the period, the speeches were long and ponderous. At the end of the oratory, Judge Jordan threw off his coat and dug a hole in the ground. Into it Judge Helfenstein symbolically placed a bottle of Susquehanna River water and a piece of coal from Zerbe Gap, proclaiming:

Be it known that I do hereby publish the banns between Zerbe Gap and the Susquehanna River. If any know just cause or impediment why the two should not be joined together by a railroad on the first of November next, let him declare it now, or ever hereafter hold his peace.⁴⁹

POTTSVILLE AS A FRONTIER TOWN

I will teach you to pierce the bowels of the earth, and from the caverns of the mountains bring out treasures which will bring strength to our hands, and subject all nature to our use and pleasure.—*Samuel Johnson*

CURIOUS, THAT LARGE STONE PROFILE OF AN INDIAN IN THE MOUNTAIN gap at the southern approach to Pottsville! About two hundred feet above ground, this enormous Indian Head juts out from the mountain-side and overlooks the Reading Railroad tracks, the Schuylkill River, and a four-lane highway—Route 122.

The rock out of which it is formed was laid down millions of years ago, long before Indians made this region their happy hunting ground. It may be only a coincidence, but virtually all the Indian massacres of white settlers, mostly German, in Schuylkill County were perpetrated within a few miles of this natural phenomenon.

Given their piety and superstitious tendencies, could the eighteenth-century German settlers have looked upon this stone Indian and said to themselves, "God made him, and therefore let him pass for a man?" Succeeding generations were aware of it and took it for granted as they had other natural phenomena—the sky, the trees and flowers, the rivers and creeks, the hills and mountains.

So it was until 1923 when the Pottsville Chapter of the Afternoon Delphian Society¹ became the Indian Head's sponsor. The civic-minded Delphians saw the unique rock formation in a new light—as a symbol of the county's Indian lore. Under the leadership of Mrs. H. O. Bechtel, the chapter president, the Delphians had a sign erected on Route 122 calling the passing motorist's attention to the Indian Head above.

Next they enlisted the co-operation of a Reading Railroad supervisor in having his section hands trim the bushes so that the Indian Head might stand out and be seen clearly from the highway.

This program went along smoothly until the building of the new four-lane highway, the same Route 122. The Delphians' sign was removed by highway workers because it was considered a traffic hazard. The bushes were allowed to grow in again and obscure the face from highway travelers. Then miracle of miracles! One morning the Pottsville community was surprised to see the Indian Head in sharper outline than ever before, and the bushes cut away.

During the previous night, someone had climbed the mountain with a bucket and gave the old Indian his first war paint. If anybody saw this deed performed, he kept the secret well. This incident occurred many years ago. No one seems to know who started the custom, though it is usually attributed to the late Eli Heisler, local barber. Long after Heisler's death, and surrounded, as before, by an air of mystery, the custom continues. Periodically, as the paint wears off, someone climbs the mountain to give the Indian a face lifting "as seems him good."

Individualism appears to be asserting itself in this new folk art. Pottsville people are suspecting more than one folk artist at work. The latest, who may have read Egyptian mythology somewhere (probably in the Pottsville Free Public Library), gave the Indian profile a full-face eye, and painted it white, yet!

And when this coat of paint began fading, another application followed it so that the Indian might continue to show his best face to the automobile-traveling public. This time a folk artist not only made the full-face eye disappear, but gave the head a war bonnet that made him look like one of those television Indians who were after Daniel Boone's scalp. From the highway, it looked more like a feather duster than anything else, at least to this observer. The unknown artist could not let well enough alone—no! Carried away by a buoyant spirit of creativeness, he had to paint the Indian's nose

white "chust fer so," thereby making him a half-breed. This proved to be a shocking offense to the taste of the town's purists, who must take their Indians straight or not at all.

The Indian's location is the most logical place, say the town's pedants, as if they, and not the Hand of God, had put it there. It is an unplanned memorial to the white settlers—men, women, and children—who were massacred and scalped in the neighborhood. To the rear of the Indian, beyond a hill or two, is the eastern end of the ten-mile historic Indian Run - Swatara Valley, watershed of Indian Run and Black Creek, a branch of the Swatara which the Pennsylvania Dutch call "The Red Hole." Here, in the eighteenth century, Indians to and from their mass attacks would hole up and play a grim game of hide-and-seek with militiamen. For here, both White Man and Indian had a trail in common. The savages would wait and see through which end pursuing militiamen entered the valley, and then they would escape through the opposite exit. Wily and fast, they were seldom caught.

The Indian's new eye seems focused northeastward, on Route 209 and the Pottsville Hospital. Well it might, for here Pottsville's only Indian massacre of white settlers occurred.²

THE NEYMAN MURDER—HISTORY OR LEGEND?

The massacre involved a pioneer German family—the Neymans—who were Pottsville's first settlers. Sometime during the Revolutionary War, according to legend, father Neyman and several of his children were murdered in their log cabin by Indians; according to folklore, one of the victims, a baby lying in its crib, was found with an arrow through its body.

Pottsville was still a frontier settlement when the Neyman massacre legend took form and was circulated by word of mouth as an *Alda Weiverglawva* (old wives' tale), and in this traditional manner it was handed down from one generation to another. Some families treated it as history. Others made light of it as a legend. In bar-rooms and cigar stores, one could always get a laugh by repeating the local stock joke: "Yep, the Injuns came, took one look at the cabin between the mountain and the swamp where the Neymans had made their home, and said, 'White man build here? Him too crazy to live. We kill 'im'."

By the 1890's, this joke was no longer funny to members of the Historical Society of Schuylkill County. They preferred to believe that the Neyman legend had a historical kernel although they were puzzled over the apparent absence of any record of the murder.

Moved by curiosity, one of the members, the late D. C. Henning, wrote Colonel W. H. Egle, state librarian, at Harrisburg, inquiring about the Neyman incident.

Under date of December 22, 1896, Colonel Egle answered as follows:

In reply to your inquiry I would beg leave to state that if you examine the *Pennsylvania Archives*, Vol. 8, Page 529, you will find a reference to the massacre of John Negman who "lived at the saw mill on the road from Reading to Shamokin about three miles above Conrad Minnich's, and 33 from Reading, on Sunday, was with his three young children barbarously murdered by the Indians." This letter is dated August 30, 1780.

[This is spelled in the Archives "Negman," which is an error. The letter "g" should be a "y".]

With the best of good wishes, I beg to remain

Yours very truly,
William H. Egle,
State Librarian.

So the letter "g" was the villain! Colonel Egle's brackets disclose why the Neyman massacre eluded researchers so long. It was folklore that preserved the memory of this tragic event in Pottsville history.

Pivot of this official correspondence is the report, dated September 1, 1780, of Captain Dennis Leary of the Marines. Having been in the neighborhood of the Neyman cabin at the time of the massacre, his report has the force and immediacy of eyewitness testimony. Addressed to William Moore, then vice-president of the Pennsylvania Supreme Executive Council, the report, in part, follows:

I think it is my duty to inform you that on Sunday last I was alarmed with an account of an attack made by the Indians at a house about a mile from my post on Schuylkill [River]. I immediately marched thither with four men and buried the man of the house and two children who lay dead, and a little girl having been carried off by the Indians. The day following I went in pursuit of the enemy with ten men and was the same day joined by Captain Jacob Balty, and the next day by Colonel Linteman [Col. John Michael Lindemuth] with about 50 men between them. With these we scoured the woods 'till yesterday noon when we came down to Reading

Captain Leary's report of the Neyman massacre became the subject of official correspondence among some of the highest officers of the Pennsylvania Supreme Executive Council; James Wilson, a signer of the Declaration of Independence; and Chevalier Luzerne, Minister Plenipotentiary of France, our Revolutionary War ally. Benjamin Franklin was also much concerned.

Captain Leary and a few militiamen guarded German woodcutters who were engaged in the Paul Bunyan-like task of cutting down what was then believed to be the tallest white pine trees on the American continent, for the fledgling American Navy and the Royal French Navy, then anchored in Rhode Island waters. The timber was obtained from the swampy bottom land at the Schuylkill Gap owned by a company in which James Wilson had an interest.

With the German woodcutters frightened and reluctant to stay on, the Neyman massacre gave Captain Leary a forceful and legitimate excuse for prodding the Supreme Executive Council into rushing ammunition and reinforcements to this important outpost on the eastern Pennsylvania frontier. The American Navy and the French Royal Navy were desperately in need of those giant masts for their ships.³

EARLY MINING IN SCHUYLKILL COUNTY

It was only three years after the Neyman massacre that anthracite was discovered in the neighborhood. In many parts of Schuylkill County, German settlers struck outcroppings when they dug a few feet under the surface on their farms. This was the case with Berkhart Moser, founder of Tamaqua, in the east end of the county. In the summer of 1799, Moser, a German immigrant and a veteran of the Revolutionary War, trudged over the Blue Mountain from Lynn Township, Lehigh County, in search of new farmland. Upon arrival in a narrow valley formed by the Sharp and Locust Mountains, at a point where Panther Creek empties into the Little Schuylkill River, he paused to look around. This place seemed to have everything he had sought—mountain slopes of virgin timber, a stream for a sawmill, and good soil for farming. Moser staked out his claim that included future Tamaqua's East End, and then went home.

In September of that year, Moser returned to build a sawmill,

Tamaqua's first building of any kind. Two years later, in 1801, when he had cleared timberland for a farm capable of sustaining a family, he built a cabin of rough-hewn logs to which he brought his wife, Catherine, a son, Jacob, and a daughter, Barbara. His son, John, who later laid out Coal Dale, was born in this log cabin in 1805.

As a farmer and timberman, Moser prospered greatly. In 1817, while excavating for a new building, he struck a seam of coal in the presence of his son, Jacob. Thus he added coal to his farm and timber business. After quarrying the coal, he would deliver it himself, on his back, frequently to Lehigh County over the Blue Mountain. It was on one of these mountain trips that he left one day, never to be seen alive again. Like Philip Ginder's, his death remains a mystery.⁴

In the latter part of the eighteenth century and early in the nineteenth, a number of coal quarries were opened in and around Pottsville. Much of this crudely-mined coal was used in country blacksmith shops, in small iron works, and even in homes along the Schuylkill River. The coal would be hauled by teams of horses to the riverbank and poled down the river in arks. Dreibelbis', a Pennsylvania German settlement, now Schuylkill Haven, was the headquarters not only for ark and raft building, but for experienced steersmen.

Pioneer Pennsylvania Dutch mine operators who entered the anthracite industry with a limited knowledge of mining engineering and geology nevertheless prospered if they worked hard and used intelligence, initiative, and courage. This was especially true of Peter W. Sheaffer of Pottsville. Born in 1819 in Halifax, Dauphin County, he was a son of Henry Sheaffer who opened the first coal mines in the Lykens Valley and built the county's first railroad to transport anthracite.

Peter W. Sheaffer ended his formal education at Oxford Academy in New York, and at seventeen joined Pennsylvania's First Geological Survey. Between 1836 and 1838, working with experienced engineers and geologists, he learned the fundamental principles of geology. The survey was suspended for lack of funds, and young Sheaffer, with his special knowledge, joined his father's staff.

In 1851 he was successful in persuading the Pennsylvania Legislature to appropriate funds for the completion of the First Geological Survey. Sheaffer's responsibility in this survey gave him precise knowledge of the location of rich, untapped anthracite seams, es-

pecially those underlying the wilderness north of the Broad Mountain.

After completion of the survey, he opened up the coal fields of Mahanoy and Shenandoah Valleys. He not only started mines but laid out Ashland, Girardville, Shenandoah, Mahanoy City, and other towns that for many years thrived on the prosperity of the anthracite industry. Sheaffer owned coal lands and mines of his own in this area, and also managed neighboring properties for William Parker Foulke, Philadelphia capitalist, for the Girard Estate, and others.

His spectacular success in the Mahanoy and Shenandoah Valleys gave Peter W. Sheaffer national renown as a self-made geologist and mining engineer. He made a substantial contribution to American geology, then a young science. He was called upon to make geological surveys in Canada and in virgin coal areas all over the United States. The leisure made possible by his wealth enabled him to pursue scholarship in his special field. His "Historical Map of Pennsylvania," published in 1875, was considered a substantial contribution. In addition, he addressed many learned scientific societies.

Peter W. Sheaffer, unlike other coal operators, continued living in his adopted town, Pottsville, and ploughed back some of his fortune into local philanthropies, a tradition followed by his descendants. As a Methodist, he carried out John Wesley's counsel: "Make all you can, save all you can, give all you can."⁵

Claude W. Unger (1882-1945) was another self-educated Pennsylvania Dutch authority on the anthracite industry. He won distinction in local history and as a collector of Pennsylvania Dutch folklore and antiques; but nothing fascinated him as much as the geology and history of the hard-coal industry. He was, for example, one of the world's greatest authorities on the fossils of the coal measures about which he was consulted by scientists in the United States and abroad. Among his startling discoveries were two fossils named for him. Scholars and writers beat a path to his door in Pottsville. He was a gallant, generous spirit, eager to learn Nature's secrets and just as eager to pass on his acquired knowledge.⁶

Early leases covered a run on the outcrop or strike of the seams of about one hundred yards, with allowance for additional land to handle broken coal. The plan first adopted was to sink pits on an elevated position, from which the coal was hoisted in buckets with a common windlass worked by hand. When the excess water became too heavy for hoisting, usually at a depth of forty feet, the pit was abandoned.

As this method proved uneconomical, the pioneer operators next tried the gin, worked by horsepower; generally a wheezy and decrepit animal, one step from the glue factory, was used.

This was a big improvement over the earlier method, but it had its disadvantages; as the pit deepened, the excess water increased in volume and eventually drowned out the mine.

Operators then discovered the advantage of opening seams from the foot of hills by drifts, which was their first scientific approach to mining. The drift was a tunnel opening, driven into the side of a hill through intervening rock, on an incline to provide gravity drainage. This more permanent type of operation brought about longer leases of coal lands and solved the water problem.

For many years the Schuylkill County mines were "water-level" workings. Operators postponed going below water level as long as possible to avoid the expense of a steam engine and water pump.

It was a rugged life. Many of the mines were located in the solitary depths of a forest, in mountain gaps, and in dense ravines. If there were no Indian paths, the early operator had to blaze his own. The landscape, marked by frowning crags and precipices, mountain slopes covered with towering pines and oaks, masses of wild flowers and plants, and swamps, was forbidding. The echoes of men's voices in that vast loneliness mingled eerily with the rhythm of rushing water and the noises made by prowling beasts of the forest. Against panthers, bears, catamounts, and other wild game, the pioneer operator and his miners carried some protection—a blunt instrument of some kind, or a gun.

The large number of Pennsylvania Dutch coal operators⁷ probably was responsible for the highly individualistic system of mine development early in Schuylkill County history. In this respect, Schuylkill was unique. Public opinion, the *Miners' Journal*, and the operators all supported private, individual enterprise. Outside of Schuylkill County, mining was very largely in the hands of corporations that had been specifically authorized by law to mine, transport, and sell coal. In Schuylkill, mining was done by individuals and firms who leased their coal land and who, being unable to handle their own sales, shipped their tonnages to Philadelphia brokers. From the very beginning there was opposition to this incorporation of coal mining. Only a few corporations did business under grants from New York and other states. Fear of monopoly was largely the cause of this anti-incorporation feeling.

Pioneer-mined anthracite was bulk coal. Up to about 1830, prepara-

tion (what little the coal received) took place in the mine itself. After cutting down the coal, and after the smoke and coal dust had cleared, the miner broke up the largest pieces with a sledgehammer weighing five to six pounds. With a wrought-iron rake, the prongs of which were two inches apart, he separated the marketable lump coal from smaller sizes and from slate and dirt; and the smaller sizes were then thrown back into the gob and left in the mine.

The first attempt at outside screening was made in 1830. Various crude devices for removing fine coal, slate, and other impurities were tried. One was the same wrought-iron rake as was used inside. Another was the riddle, which was a sieve with coarse wire meshes. Later a device that became known as a "penitentiary" was widely used by operators. This was a perforated cast-iron plate through which the coal was broken with hammers; the coal fell into a hopper, and from there into a circular screen worked by hand, horsepower, or by steam. The larger lumps that survived this process were shipped to market, while the rest was dumped onto dirt banks.⁸ When anthracite customers in Philadelphia and elsewhere got tired of breaking up their own coal, a market for standard sizes developed. The coal thus prepared became known in the trade as "broken and screen," and it commanded fifty cents a ton more than lump coal. Screens with meshes of different dimensions were manufactured in and around Pottsville.⁹

The modern method of preparing anthracite in a "coal breaker" had its beginning at the Wolf Creek Colliery, north of Minersville, Schuylkill County, in April, 1844, thanks to the enterprise and energy of a Pennsylvania Dutchman, Gideon Bast, owner of the colliery.

The coal breaker was invented by Joseph Battin, a gas works superintendent, in Philadelphia. Battin was born of poor Quaker parents on a farm north of Bloomsburg, Columbia County, near the Western Middle Coal Field. He learned of the desperate need of a "coal-breaking machine" during his periodic visits to the parental farm. His first patent was issued in 1843, and the second, in 1844.¹⁰

Battin's breaker had two cast-iron rollers, one with projecting teeth, the other with empty spaces for the teeth to fit in. The coal was broken as the rollers revolved. From the rollers the coal passed to a long flat screen, hanging in an inclined position, which cleansed and sorted it for the market.

Driven by a ten-horsepower steam engine, Battin's breaker produced two hundred tons of anthracite daily. It eliminated the jobs of sixty

employees, and thus sold itself to Gideon Bast and the other coal operators who signed agreements based on the payment of royalty fees.

The demonstration at the Wolf Creek Colliery received widespread publicity, for the invention had created a revolution in the anthracite industry. Yet Gideon Bast, rather than Joseph Battin, the inventor, was destined to be remembered as the father of the modern coal breaker. This is largely because Bast was a more forceful personality and knew better how to take advantage of opportunities, even those provided by advertising and publicity, in the knowledge of which he was far ahead of his time. He was one of the most successful of the Pennsylvania Dutch coal operators in Schuylkill County.

Gideon Bast came of a pioneer Berks County family whose progenitor, Jacob Bast, was of Jewish origin, according to Beers' history of Schuylkill County.¹¹ Gideon was born in Berks County on April 1, 1801. Even in boyhood he showed a bent for business, and at fifteen he became a pack peddler in Berks and Schuylkill Counties. When he had accumulated enough money, he bought a horse and wagon and thus widened his territory. At twenty-five he opened a general store in Berks County with a brother-in-law. After eight years this partnership was dissolved, and Bast moved to Schuylkill Haven, one of the principal ports on the Schuylkill Canal. Here he prospered as storekeeper. Like so many other Pennsylvania Dutchmen of the 1830's, he could not resist the temptation of entering the mining industry, and he remained active for many years. He died on March 10, 1880.¹²

Gideon's son, Emmanuel, continued the family coal-mining business. He must have been a hustler, judging from a song that his breaker boys used to sing about him (behind his back). The following are the two lines of the song that still survive.

Pick your slates and pick them fast,
That's the rule of Manny Bast.¹³

NECHO ALLEN—ANTHRACITE PIONEER

Among non-German early anthracite entrepreneurs was Necho Allen who became a folk hero in Schuylkill County when he unwittingly set fire to an outcropping of coal on Broad Mountain, near

Pottsville, in 1790. Ever since that campfire incident, tradition has credited him as the first discoverer of anthracite in the county.

In local folklore Necho Allen is a picturesque figure of considerable appeal. The popular image is of an easygoing fellow, a New Englander by birth, who subsisted on the game he shot. The time of his arrival in Pottsville is unknown. In real life, Necho Allen was a sturdy, active pioneer who helped to start the anthracite industry in Schuylkill County. He did considerable prospecting of coal lands on his own initiative or on commission for others. He held warrants to four large tracts of Schuylkill coal lands in three townships—Norwegian, Reilly, and Branch; the fourth tract, just south of Ashland, later in the nineteenth century passed to the ownership of the Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company.

In New Castle Township there is a tract of 389 acres of coal lands that has been involved in litigation. It is now included in the property generally known as the Broad Mountain lands, for which Necho Allen held the original warrants. When the Centre Turnpike was built through this township, the first tavern on Broad Mountain was opened by Necho Allen and his wife, Catherine, at the Big Spring.

As late as 1830 Allen sold a property to Benjamin Bannan, editor-publisher of the Pottsville *Miners' Journal* in Manheim Township. Two years later, assessment books show him still a property owner and taxpayer in Manheim. At one time his home was on the main street of the village of Mount Carbon, which runs up the hollow where he operated a sawmill, and bought and sold coal lands.

Together with Col. George Shoemaker, Allen operated a small mine at Centreville, later known as North America. Out of this came the coal that was loaded into nine wagons and taken to Philadelphia by Colonel Shoemaker during the War of 1812. This incident, in which Shoemaker narrowly escaped arrest for trying to sell "rocks" as coal, is part of the folklore associated with the introduction of anthracite in Philadelphia.

Necho Allen lived in Schuylkill County at least forty-two years after the Broad Mountain campfire incident. The year 1832, when his name was still on the Manheim Township assessment books, is the last one associated with the living Allen. He is presumed to have died suddenly during that year or shortly after. The precise time, place, and circumstances of his death are not known.¹⁴

COLONEL THOMAS POTTS' DISCOVERY

In 1783—seven years before Necho Allen's campfire discovery—Col. Thomas Potts, Revolutionary War hero, wealthy ironmaster, and son of John Potts, founder of Pottstown, Montgomery County, had an interesting experience. Accompanied by servants and Indian guides, he came to Anthony's Wilderness to do some postwar hunting. While encamped on the west branch of Norwegian Creek, near the present site of Pottsville, he bent over to take a drink of the stream. In doing so he observed waterworn black pebbles lying at the bottom of the crystal-clear creek. A trained mineralogist, he examined a handful with more than mere curiosity, which led him to the conclusion that they were pieces of stone coal, as anthracite was then known.¹⁵

The ironmaster took some samples home and tried them out in his furnaces, and they proved their worth as fuel for iron-making. Soon after, he returned with a crew of iron miners who opened coal beds in the vicinity of Norwegian Creek. Warrants for coal-bearing lands were bought up from German settlers, among whom were: Thomas, Samuel, and Henry Basler whose sawmill on the creek is of historic significance; Henry Coppenhaver, John Garber, Baltzer Gehr, and Charles Shoemaker. Colonel Potts assembled 2,800 acres of coal-bearing land in ten adjoining parcels, which became known as the Norwegian Tract, for which two thousand pounds sterling in gold and silver was paid.¹⁶

To help finance this large-scale purchase and to open coal mines, Colonel Potts organized the Norwegian Company in which he was associated with the following men: his brother, Samuel Potts; his son, William; his nephew, Nathaniel Potts; his cousin, Samuel Baird; Colonel Francis Nichols; General Arthur St. Clair; and Sharp Delaney.¹⁷ The deed issued to these eight men by Baltzer Gehr and Charles Shoemaker of Berks County is dated March 5, 1784.¹⁸

During the same month, the Pennsylvania Legislature passed two acts in which coal was mentioned, one of them creating commissioners to care for Schuylkill River navigation "from the mouth of the Tamequay Creek to the *coal mines* on Schuylkill at Basler's saw mill."

However, about one year later, upon Colonel Potts' death, the Norwegian Company was liquidated and his associates sold their shares in the Norwegian Tract.

In 1792 the property was owned by William and Luke Morris and Colonel Potts' brother, Samuel. The latter sold his interest to Isaac Thomas and Lewis Reese after reserving the mineral rights, including coal, under a separate deed. This reservation insured Samuel Potts' heirs a lucrative income from coal royalties for generations.

POTTSVILLE'S FOUNDER—POTT OR POTTS?

Isaac Thomas and Lewis Reese held title to the Norwegian Tract until 1806 when they sold most of it to John Pott, an outstanding Pennsylvania German entrepreneur. At the time of this transaction, Pottsville was still a wilderness of tall trees, thick underbrush, swamps, hills, and ravines. The new owner planned to develop this dismal territory into an iron plantation to manufacture pig iron by charcoal as the aristocratic Potts family was doing farther down in the Schuylkill Valley.

Pott assigned his son, John, Jr., and Daniel Focht to supervise the improvement of the land and the building of a new furnace, forge and workers' homes. By 1810 the place was in a condition to receive the owner and his large family. "Greenwood" was the name given to the Pott plantation. The iron run from his furnace was cast into hollow ware and stoves, and traded for Pennsylvania Dutch farmers' grain that he ground up in his own gristmill. It was while digging for a foundation for this mill that Pott struck an outcrop of anthracite. Thus, he and his sons found themselves in coal mining as well as iron manufacturing. Greenwood's books show that coal was quarried there in small quantities from 1812 to 1815. Some of the coal went to Reading where Pott advertised in the German-language newspapers.¹⁹

Was John Pott the founder of Pottsville, or was it Col. Thomas Potts who had assembled the 2,800-acre Norwegian Tract? This has been a subject of controversy among Pottsville residents for many years. Contributing to confusion was the fact that both Pott and Potts families were casters of iron in their respective furnaces.

Recorded deeds, surveys, maps, and other documentary material, however, prove beyond a doubt that John Pott was the city's founder.²⁰ He had no desire to become a city father. Only the irony of fate made

him one. According to an anecdote, Pott owed twenty-five dollars to one of his blacksmiths, Charles Siegfried. Tired of being importuned by his creditor, Pott offered him a parcel of real estate to settle the debt. But Siegfried spurned the offer saying the parcel was nothing but a swamp. What was a swamp in 1815, today is Pottsville's main business street, probably worth twenty-five million dollars instead of the twenty-five dollar value originally placed on it. Pott paid off his debt like a gentleman, and decided to add town development to his other enterprises.

Henry Donnell, a civil engineer, was engaged to survey the original town plot that embraced the northern slope of Sharp Mountain and the broad valley of Norwegian Creek. Centre Turnpike became Centre Street between Union and Race, and Mahantongo Street was laid out from Centre to Sixth Street. Subsequently, Pott had other streets and lots cut through. In 1824 there were only a dozen homes in Pottsville. A report of the assessed valuation of the borough in January, 1832, showed that the number of homes had increased to 492. By 1835 the borough's population had jumped to more than three thousand. Anthracite was responsible for this sudden growth.²¹

Like so many other early American towns, Pottsville developed from a roadside tavern—the White Horse. Its weatherbeaten sign, bearing the likeness of a horse, became a famous symbol of congenial hospitality up and down the Centre Turnpike, from Reading on the Schuylkill River to Sunbury on the Susquehanna. Built in 1818 by George Dengler, later purchased by founder John Pott, the White Horse Tavern catered to the traveling public, especially stagecoach passengers and Pennsylvania Dutch Conestoga wagoners. Because its guests were bearers of news and scandal from the outside world, the tavern also attracted local people, eager to be informed. Centre and Mahantongo Streets, the tavern site (now occupied by the Necho Allen Hotel), was the busiest corner in town, and for that reason attracted other businesses to the vicinity. This marked the beginning of the Centre Street business district. The village spread out in all directions until it had sprawled over the town's seven hills and five valleys. Downtown Pottsville rests on comparatively level ground, but the other buildings and homes are perched high on hillsides and hilltops, combining to give the city an appearance of a walled-in fortress; picturesque, but inconvenient for those who cannot climb hills as a daily routine. Conspicuous on one of the northern hills

is the county courthouse. Directly behind it is the brownstone county prison; in the prison yard stood the gallows on which six members of the Molly Maguires were hanged on June 21, 1877.²²

Early in its history, the town was a beehive of mining activity. Black dismal caverns excavated from the earth looked like entrances to Pluto's abode. Each small mine had its cluster of company houses, termed a "mine patch," which was usually named for the landowner or the coalmine operator. John Rich and a Mr. Biltheiser operated workings around 18th Street, near the present site of the high school stadium, and a Mr. Rosenberger had a mine around 13th Street. Scattered around town were others.²³

With a fast-growing market for anthracite, Pottsville developed not only as a prosperous mining center, but also as a place for the manufacture of machinery to hoist coal, pump water out of the mines, and perform other coalmining operations. This mechanical industry attracted many skilled hands to the village. Probably the outstanding mechanical genius of this early period was a Pennsylvania Dutchman named George W. Snyder who had come from Philadelphia in 1835. In partnership with Benjamin Haywood, he started Pottsville's first machinery-manufacturing factory. The first hoisting engine was built in 1836 for George H. Potts at the York Farm Colliery. The largest pump in the United States prior to 1864 was built by Haywood and Snyder for the Union Canal's Lebanon water works in 1839.²⁴

Pottsville has a distinctive air, which is a heritage from the early years. It started as a quiet German settlement with farming and timbering as its main industries. During the coal rush of 1829, people from all over the world came to try making quick fortunes.

A special group of fortune hunters were young men from Proper Philadelphia families. By canalboats and stages they came with words of warning ringing in their ears, "Son, don't be gulled." At the same time, their portmanteaus bulged with money to tempt their gullibility. Some went broke buying and selling coal lands, paper towns, and undeveloped mines. Some, luckier, made sound investments in the burgeoning new industry, and settled down amid these hills.

Illustrative of the vast amount of optimism for the future that prevailed in those days is an anecdote of a young Philadelphian offering to buy a corner lot in a paper town.

"How much?" he asked diffidently, pointing to a map.

"Five thousand dollars," replied the real estate promoter.

"Why, sir," meekly replied the youth, "For five thousand dollars I can buy a lot, equally as large, in Philadelphia."

"Oh, my dear sir," said the promoter, "you must not pretend to compare Philadelphia in a business point of view with this place. A few years, sir, will render this the great metropolis of trade, and Philadelphia will be nothing to compare with it!"²⁵

With fortune hunters from everywhere, miners from the British Isles, and skilled craftsmen from various parts of the Eastern seaboard, Pottsville inevitably developed as a cosmopolitan city; but the original German, or Pennsylvania Dutch, flavor has persisted throughout its history.²⁶

Nor did it lose its kinship with Philadelphia. A few street names—Arch, Race, Market, and Chestnut—are obviously Philadelphian, as is the pattern of numerical cross streets. Its annual Assembly ball, fashioned after the one in the Quaker City, is already more than a hundred years old. And for its five c's—clothes, catering, capital, culture, and college—the town invariably went to Philadelphia. And a time-honored custom among some Mahantongo Street families was to retire to Philadelphia in old age with the thought that it was as good a halfway station as any on the road to Paradise.²⁷

An interesting coincidence of the town's pioneer period was the disproportionately large number of residents who bore the family name of Pott, as pointed out by a contemporary writer:

You would swear there were no Potts anywhere else. In the newspapers it is the eminent prefix of half the advertising column. In Centre Street there it is again, in five calligraphic letters a foot long, in convenient Christian abbreviations, upon half the signs of the village: A. Pott, U. Pott, T. Pott, and Pr. Pott. It became, a few years ago, a common designation of nearly all the village beaux. One was Miss Hamilton's Pott; another, Miss Slaymaker's; another, Miss Schiff's; another, Miss Pott's Pott; as embarrassing it became, at last, as Smith or Thompson in some other towns. Some tried to disguise it by orthographic changes and quaint pronunciations. One calls herself Miss Putt, another adding an "s"; another again, for no earthly purpose but to get rid of the cacophony of this inharmonious monosyllable, got married. And the unhappy mistakes, too! Why, I know a girl who went the other day into a store, and asking timidly for Mrs. Pott, the clerk hastened upstairs, and came down directly with a teapot in each hand!²⁸

The same writer paints a vivid word picture of Pottsville's first dozen years as a borough. Living quarters were so crowded, he tells

us, that some hotel guests retired at three in the afternoon just to be sure of having a bed for the night; and friends shared the same room in shifts. Some local people turned their homes into boarding houses to take care of the overflow, and obtained exorbitant fees. One landlord, a conscientious man, said, "By Got! I used to shut my eyes in asking the rent."

The following is a sample of local justice in those chaotic days:

For the edification of the long robe, I will notice briefly a few cases not reported in Sergeant and Davis. The one, the defendant having proved refractory and insolent, the judge leaped from the bench, and kicked him out of doors; and then gave "judgment by default." The next was a case of suffrage, and was decided that the place in which this great prerogative of freemen was to be exercised was the township "where one had his washing done!" The next, the case of a pig, two citizens having bought it in partnership. One insisted on killing said pig, and the other refusing, the former put his design in execution, and was sued. Judgment for the defendant, he having sent a breakfast of the sausages to the Squire [Judge] on the morning of the trial. The last I will mention was a Dutch case of crim. con., brought in from the country. Facts stared them in the face. Damages eight dollars, and all parties pleased. Alas! there were none of these cases among us, for there were no women.²⁹

THE COAL RUSH OF 1829

In the coal rush of 1829, Pottsville sprang overnight from a hamlet into a busy mining center. Capitalists, arm-in-arm with confidential advisers such as civil engineers and geologists, explored every recess of the region to estimate the present and future value of each particular spot. But in the absence of the right tools and machinery, which had not yet been invented, and with only a superficial knowledge of the geological formation, they were no better off than the speculators who were willing to gamble on blind chance. Principal reason for the wild, speculative mania that possessed several thousand otherwise sane men and youths was this general ignorance of the real value and resources of the coal lands. That is what made the period of the coal rush of 1829 so ludicrous when viewed in perspective by those who had participated in it.

One who survived the ordeal of that period in Pottsville history

—characterized by loose morals, general lawlessness, fraud and trickery, and primitive living conditions so typical of a frontier town—was Joseph C. Neal, well-known humorist of the day. This, in part, is how Pottsville, suffering from coal fever, looked to him the morning after:

We perceive, by the *Miners' Journal*, that Pottsville—the El Dorado of 1829—has not shared the fate which is usually allotted to precocious youngsters, and that it holds a very respectable rank in point of size and population. Well, we are glad of it, for it is a beautiful village and situated in the bosom of the most romantic country of which Pennsylvania can boast. But there are many who do not recall its image with complacency, nor remember its crags and peaks with anything resembling a glow of satisfaction. The army of youths who rushed there in 1829 terminated their expedition in a retreat, like that of Napoleon in Moscow, bringing away with them nothing but glory, and as much experience as that amounts to. They will, however, be wiser men, if not richer, for the rest of their lives.

In the memorable year to which we allude, rumors of fortunes made at a blow, and competency secured by a turn of the fingers, come whispering down the Schuylkill and penetrating the city. The ball gathered strength by rolling—young and old were smitten with the desire to march upon the new Peru, rout the aborigines, and sate themselves with wealth. They had merely to go, and play the game boldly, to secure their utmost desire. Rumor declared that Pipkins was worth millions, made in a few months, although he had not sixpence to begin with, or to keep grim want from dancing in his pocket. Fortune kept her court in the mountains of Schuylkill county, and all who paid their respects to her in person, found her as kind as their wildest hopes could imagine.

The Ridge road was well travelled. Reading stared to see the lengthened columns of emigration, and her astonished inhabitants looked with wonder upon the groaning stagecoaches, the hundreds of horsemen, and the thousands of footmen, who streamed through that ancient and respectable borough, and as for *Ultima Thule*, Orwigsburg, it has not recovered from its fright to this day!

Eight miles further brought the army to the land of milk and honey, and then the sport began—the town was far from large enough to accommodate the new accessions; but they did not come for comfort; they did not come to stay. They were to be among the mountains, like Sinbad in the valley of diamonds, just long enough to transform themselves from the likeness of Peter, the moneyless, into that of a millionaire; and then they intended to wing their flight to the perfumed saloons of metropolitan wealth and fashion. What though they slept in layers on the sanded floors of Troutman's and Shoemaker's bar rooms, and learned to regard

it as a favor that they were allowed the accommodation of a roof by paying roundly for it, a few months would pass, and then Aladdin, with the Genius of the Lamp, could not raise a palace or a banquet with more speed than they!

One branch of the adventurers betook themselves to land speculations, and another to the slower process of mining. With the first, mountains, rocks, and valleys changed hands with astonishing rapidity. That which was worth only hundreds in the morning, sold for thousands in the evening and would command tens of thousands by sunrise—in paper money of that description known among the facetious as slow notes. Days and nights were consumed in surveys and chaffering. There was not a man who did not speak like a Croesus—even your ragged rascal could talk of his hundreds of thousands.

The tracts of land, in passing through so many hands, became subdivided, and that brought on another act in the dream of speculation: the manufacture of towns, and the selling of town lots. Every speculator had his town laid out, and many of them had scores of towns. They were, to be sure, located in the pathless forests; but the future Broadways and Pall Malls were marked upon the trees: and it was anticipated that the time was not far distant when the deers, bears and wild-cats would be obliged to give place, and take the gutter side of the belles and beaux of the new cities. How beautifully the towns, yet unborn, looked upon paper!—the embryo squares, flaunting in pink and yellow, like a tulip show at Amsterdam: and the broad streets intersecting each other at right angles, in imitation of the common parent, Philadelphia. The skill of the artist was exerted to render them attractive; and the more German text, and the more pink and yellow, the more valuable became the town! The value of a lot, bedaubed with vermilion, was incalculable, and even a sky parlor location, one edge of which rested upon the side of a perpendicular mountain, the lot running back into the air a hundred feet or so from the level of the earth, by the aid of the paint box, was no despicable bargain: and the corners of Chestnut and Chatham streets in the town of Caledonia, situated in the centre of an almost impervious laurel swamp, brought a high price in market, for it was illustrated by a patch of yellow ochre!

The bar-rooms were hung round with these brilliant fancy sketches: every man had a roll of inchoate towns in the side-pocket of his fustian jacket. The most populous country in the world is not so thickly studded with settlements as the Coal Region was to be; but they remain, unluckily, in *status quo ante bellum*.

At some points a few buildings were erected to give an appearance of realizing promises. There was one town with a fine name, which had a great barn of a frame hotel. The building was let for nothing; but after a trial of a few weeks, customers were so scarce at the

Red Cow, that the tenant swore roundly he must have it on better terms, or he would give up the lease.

The other branch of our adventurers bent their attention to mining; and they could show you, by the aid of a pencil and a piece of paper, the manner in which they must make fortunes, one and all, in a given space of time—expenses, so much; transportation, so much; will sell for so much, leaving a clear profit of—! There was no mistake about the matter. To it they went, boring the mountains, swamping their money and themselves. The hills swarmed with them; they clustered like bees about a hive; but not a hope was realized. Calculations, like towns, are one thing on paper, and quite another when brought to the test.

At last the members of the expedition began to look haggard and careworn. The justices done a fine business; and Natty M——s, Blue Breeches, Pewter-Legs, and other worthies of the catchpole profession, toiled at their vocation with ceaseless activity. When the game could not be run down at view, it was taken by ambuscade. Several bold navigators discovered that the county had accommodations at Orwigsburg³⁰ for gentlemen in trouble. Capiases, securities and bail-pieces became as familiar as your garter. The play was over, and the farce of *The Devil to Pay* was the after-piece. There was but one step from the sublime to the ridiculous, and Pottsville saw it taken!

Gay gallants, who had but a few months before rolled up the turnpike, swelling with hope, and flushed with expectation, now betook themselves, in the grey of the morn, and then the haze of the evening, with bundle on back—the wardrobe of the Honorable Dick Dowles tied up in a little blue and white pocket handkerchief—to the towpath, making, in court phrase, "mortal escapes"; and, in the end, a general rush was effected—the army was disbanded.³¹



WHEN ANTHRACITE MADE STEEL

Old Pennsylvania. Her sons, like the soil, a rough outside, but solid stuff within; plenty of coal to warm her friends, plenty of iron to cool her enemies.—*A toast by Nicholas Biddle (1786–1844), Philadelphia financier.*

CENTER OF IRON-STEEL INDUSTRY

The iron-steel industry once was concentrated in eastern Pennsylvania—chiefly in the anthracite region and surrounding the Pennsylvania Dutch counties of Lehigh, Berks, Lebanon, York, and Lancaster—because of the proximity of anthracite to iron ore deposits. For twenty years—between 1854 and 1874—anthracite was the number one metallurgical fuel in the United States. By 1874 anthracite-burning blast furnaces were producing nearly half of the nation's pig iron.¹

The period when anthracite was the predominant fuel in the iron industry corresponded to that crucial era in American history when the United States was emerging as a dominant world economic power. Anthracite made possible the growing use of the steam engine in railroad transportation as well as in mills and factories. Pennsylvania

not only enjoyed a monopoly of anthracite production but made most use of it as a metallurgical fuel and, at the same time, had more than fifty per cent of the available iron ore deposits. What occurred in Pennsylvania was significant because of the Keystone State's dominant role in the nation's growth. By thus contributing to Pennsylvania's industrial development, anthracite helped to build the United States during the period of its greatest expansion.

Pennsylvania's iron production from anthracite-operated furnaces fell sharply after 1880 as a result of the building of the Pittsburgh region's large furnaces which operated exclusively on coke fuel. The steel industry moved westward, away from the anthracite region, to be closer to the rich iron ores of the Lake Superior region and to take advantage of the cheaper lake transportation facilities. Most of today's blast furnace practice has been built around the smelting of Lake Superior ores using by-product coke as a fuel. However, some of the big steel companies are tapping new sources, such as those in Venezuela, Labrador, Africa, and Canada.

Iron manufacture is the country's oldest industry. The first ironworks were established in the Massachusetts Bay Colony in the seventeenth century under the name of "Company of Undertakers for the Iron Works." But while the iron industry, based on charcoal as a fuel, developed in all the colonies, Pennsylvania had most of the blast furnaces and bloomeries because of the abundance there of all the materials necessary in the manufacture of iron: rich iron ore deposits outcropping on the surface, and to a small extent obtained from bogs and swamps; vast primeval forests that were converted to charcoal for fuel in furnaces and forges; much limestone suitable for fluxing the ores of their impurities; and numerous streams and creeks for water power to drive the tilt and helve hammers, the shears, cutters, and other machinery, as well as the bellows. The earliest ironworks in Pennsylvania were built along the tributaries of the Schuylkill River. By the time of the Revolutionary War, the Schuylkill Valley was the heart of the American iron industry.

The charcoal iron industry in Pennsylvania was organized chiefly on isolated plantations resembling, in some ways, the small feudal manors of medieval Europe. Many of them consisted of several thousand acres of land. The ironmaster and his family lived in the mansion house on a low hill overlooking the furnace or forge. These mansion houses, many built of stone, were stately buildings with large rooms, wide, open fireplaces, and fine furniture, often imported

from Europe. They stood out in sharp contrast to the crude cabins provided for the iron workers. Each plantation was self-sufficient. Besides the mansion and the workers' homes, a plantation had furnaces and forges, iron mines, a charcoal house, office, store, gristmill, sawmill, blacksmith shop, a large outside bake oven, barns, grain fields, orchards and, of course, vast timberlands. A great amount of woodland was necessary to provide the thousands of cords of wood used every year in the form of charcoal for furnaces and forges.²

Charcoal remained the fuel of the blast furnaces into the nineteenth century, but in the years following the War of 1812 many pressures forced ironmasters to experiment with new fuels such as the increasing cost of charcoal as wood became scarcer in many places, the demands of an expanding America for new kinds of products at reasonable prices, the coming of the steam engine, and foreign competition. Anthracite was the first mineral fuel to be used successfully in American blast furnaces. As early as 1826 the Franklin Institute of Philadelphia had started to encourage research in this field. In 1830 it offered a gold medal to the manufacturer of the greatest amount of iron smelted with anthracite, and a silver medal to the author of the best essay on the economical use of anthracite in steam generation. Silver medals were also offered to inventors of an economical anthracite cookstove, and a boiler adaptable to anthracite.

In 1836 the Pennsylvania General Assembly authorized incorporation of any company developing a practical anthracite iron-making process. A group of Philadelphia financiers, headed by Nicholas Biddle, offered a prize of \$5,000 to the individual who succeeded in smelting a specific amount of iron ore within a given time by using anthracite. The Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company offered free water power, coal at a discount, and canal transportation at reduced rates to ironmasters willing to undertake experiments with anthracite. These, and other inducements, stimulated experimental research, chiefly in the anthracite region.

One of the outstanding experimenters was the Reverend F. W. Geissenhainer, a Lutheran minister with a scientific bent of mind. He had conceived the idea of anthracite iron long before any public prizes were announced. The scene of his experiments was Valley Furnace, about ten miles northeast of Pottsville.

Valley Furnace is historic ground because of Geissenhainer, but none would guess it from its appearance today. It happens also to be the setting of one of the best of the anthracite miners' ballads,

"The Shoofly,"³ which is sung to a haunting tune. The first stanza and chorus of the ballad follow:

THE SHOOFLY

As I went a-walking one fine summer's morning,
It's down by the Furnace I chanced for to stroll.
I espied an old lady, I'm sure she was eighty,
At the foot of the bank and she's rootin' for coal;
And as I drew nigh her she sat on her hunkers,
And to fill her scuttle she then did begin.
To herself she was humming this mournful ditty,
And this is the song the old lady did sing:

CHORUS

Crying, "Ochone! Sure I'm nearly distracted,
For it's down in the Shoofly they cut a bad vein;
Likewise they've condemned the old slope at the Furnace
And all me fine neighbors must leave it again."

The primitive coal mine whose shutdown is bemoaned by the elderly woman in the ballad has left no trace of its former existence. Except for two houses, one occupied, the same fate has befallen Silver Creek Colliery and patch located in the neighborhood until a few years ago.

Until 1948, when the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission erected its roadside marker, even local residents had been unable to tell the origin of the name "Valley Furnace." The marker, located at the eastern approach to New Philadelphia along Route 209, reads as follows: "Valley Furnace. First furnace to use only anthracite for fuel in 1836. Built by Dr. F. W. Geissenhainer, who patented the method in 1833. Process in use continuously by the Pottsville or Pioneer Furnace, 1839 and after."

In the auditorium of the Mineral Industries Building at the Pennsylvania State University is an interesting mural entitled "Historical Events in the Mineral Industries of Pennsylvania." On that mural appears the following significant statement: "*First in the world. Anthracite used to make pig iron—Valley Furnace near Pottsville, 1836.*"

Geissenhainer was probably the earliest prospector. He and John Beidelman arrived in Blythe Township in 1820 when they took up the Valley Furnace Tract that spread over the northern part of

the township. They had no trouble negotiating for the land with the inhabitants because they could speak their language—German or the Pennsylvania Dutch dialect. German farmers were the earliest inhabitants of Blythe Township. Later settlers—Irish, Welsh, Scottish, and English immigrants—did not come into the township until after the Schuylkill Canal was opened.

Geissenhainer was unique in that he explored the Valley Furnace not only for coal, but also for hematite iron ore, of which there was an abundance. In addition to coal and iron ore, he had another essential—Silver Creek for water power, then clear, fresh, and limpid as it gushed out of the mountainside. On the creek bank he first built a forge and later a furnace where he worked hard to discover the process of smelting iron ore with anthracite.

His initial success, a limited one, came in December, 1830. He continued experiments for a year before he was ready to apply for a patent. In his claims he described his process as “a new and useful improvement in the manufacture of iron and steel by the application of anthracite coal.”

WORLD'S FIRST ANTHRACITE PIG IRON

Geissenhainer went on to refine his process until the summer of 1836 when he was finally satisfied that he had produced a pig iron with anthracite good enough to demonstrate to the world. Experts and laymen representing both the anthracite and iron industries from all over the country beat a path to his blast furnace on the banks of Silver Creek at Valley Furnace. Among the distinguished company was Pennsylvania's Governor Joseph Ritner, who was gratified with what he saw in the village. This marked the first successful production of pig iron by the use of anthracite for the hot blast in the United States.⁴

For some unexplained reason, Geissenhainer did not commercialize his process. Not long after his successful experiment he sold his interest in the Valley Furnace Tract and went to New York.

In 1838, while still living in New York, the clergyman-inventor advertised in the *Pottsville Miners' Journal*, warning those who might infringe on his legal rights that his 1833 patent was still in force. He appears to have had one man in mind, George Crane, who had

discovered a process similar to his in Wales with Welsh anthracite, and had come to Schuylkill County by invitation to demonstrate it.

Geissenhainer's advantage over his competitor—his United States patent—was of short duration. He died and his patent was sold to Crane. Soon after the transfer, Crane applied for an American patent on his own process, which differed only slightly from Geissenhainer's. With the financial assistance of the Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company, Crane organized the Lehigh Crane Iron Works at "Craneville," now Catasauqua, which he developed into one of the country's largest furnaces for smelting iron with anthracite. The first run of anthracite iron was tapped on July 4, 1840. An outstanding Welsh ironmaster, David Thomas, who made many improvements through the years, was superintendent.⁵

Meanwhile public interest was stirred by the competition for the \$5,000 prize offered by Nicholas Biddle and his associates. The field narrowed down to two blast furnaces, one in Mauch Chunk and the other in Pottsville.

The Mauch Chunk tests were conducted by a trio of men from Reading—Joseph Baughman, Julius Guiteau, and Henry High. Starting out in an old furnace, they succeeded in making anthracite iron that won the admiration of visiting ironmasters, but which still fell short of the quality desired. To achieve better results they built a new blast furnace near the Mauch Chunk weigh lock, and kept it in blast between August 27 and September 10, 1838, and during most of 1839. At its best the new furnace produced two tons of anthracite iron with each run tapped. Though the product was satisfactory, it was produced under unfavorable circumstances, chiefly mechanical. Finally, in December, 1839, the furnace was blown out, and the Reading men and their financial backers gave up the race for the Philadelphia financiers' \$5,000 prize.

The prize, therefore, went by default to the Pioneer Furnace of Pottsville. Financed by Burd Patterson, Pottsville's leading industrialist and promoter, the furnace was built after a model that Benjamin Perry had seen in Wales, and David Thomas of Wales was brought over for the purpose of supervising its construction. William Lyman was in charge of the over-all project. The furnace was put in blast on October 26, 1839. The hearth was tapped night and morning, and the yield at each time varied from 60 to 63 pigs, equal to about three tons of metal. In charging the stack, no scrap iron, wood, or charcoal was used; only pure anthracite and iron ore.

Having successfully met the test—namely, that a certain amount of iron ore be smelted with anthracite within a specified time—the proprietors of Pioneer Furnace became eligible to receive the \$5,000 prize. Accordingly, in January, 1840, Philadelphia financiers Nicholas and Thomas Biddle, Isaac Lea, Jesse Richards, J. M. Sanderson, and Dr. B. Kugler arrived in Pottsville to inspect the Pioneer Furnace and make the award. It was a great day in Pottsville history. The burghers were properly impressed by the visiting millionaires who had arrived to give their blessing to this, America's first successful permanent commercial production of anthracite iron.

The accomplishment was celebrated with a banquet at the Mount Carbon House, an elegant hotel of the day on the outskirts of Pottsville. Elaborate toasts were proposed by local residents and the distinguished visitors. For the Philadelphians, Nicholas Biddle responded, according to a contemporary account in the *Pottsville Miners' Journal*, "in a speech of great practical learning and profound eloquence."⁶

It did not take anthracite very long after that to make its impact on the iron industry. That same year (1840) there were six blast furnaces operating on anthracite fuel along the Lehigh, Schuylkill, and Susquehanna, the three principal rivers in the anthracite region. They were making 30 to 50 tons a week from hematite and other ores.⁷ The number of anthracite furnaces increased to 42 by 1846, and to 121 ten years later, most of them within or near the anthracite region. By 1870 nearly three times more anthracite iron than charcoal iron was being produced in Pennsylvania. The picturesque, old-fashioned blast furnace, with its crude bellows and wooden blowers, was fast disappearing from the landscape.⁸

In addition to its use in iron-ore smelting, anthracite became a major fuel for steam power used in mills, factories, and railroads in eastern Pennsylvania. This is reflected in the constantly increasing quantity of coal produced—4,065 tons in 1820 to nearly 11 million tons in 1860 and to 13 million tons during the Civil War.⁹

By 1860 Pennsylvania had become the nation's largest producer of bar, sheet, and railroad iron; and production centered in the hard-coal region and Pennsylvania Dutch counties. Scranton, Wilkes-Barre, Port Carbon, and other anthracite towns, and neighboring communities such as Reading, Danville, Allentown, and Bethlehem became major iron manufacturing centers, transforming pig and bar iron into a great variety of products needed in the new mechanized civilization.¹⁰



THE WORLD'S LARGEST CANAL SYSTEM

THE SCHUYLKILL CANAL

"From this port [Pottsville], which is more than 100 miles above tidewater, there is a fleet of 400 vessels—a fleet more formidable than that which bore the Greeks to the Trojan War and composed of vessels, the smallest of which is almost as large as that in which Columbus ventured to cross an unknown ocean."¹

Despite its melodramatic style, this description of the Schuylkill Canal as it was in 1830 is not overdrawn. The canal's volume of traffic was even greater as the industry's production mounted. In its peak year of 1859 no fewer than 1,400 boats moved up and down its length, making it the busiest waterway in the United States. In a half century of extraordinary prosperity, more than 15 million tons of anthracite passed through it to market. And the Schuylkill Canal was the key link in a chain of interdependent artificial waterways built early in the nineteenth century principally for the transportation of anthracite from mines to tidewater.

Three of the canals originating in the hard-coal region—the Schuylkill, the Lehigh, and the Pine Grove branch of the Union Canal—all terminated in Philadelphia. The Delaware and Hudson Canal, which tapped the northern part of the anthracite region, ran between

Honesdale, Wayne County, and Rondout (now Kingston) in New York and had New York City as its prime market. The North Branch of the Pennsylvania Canal, with Nanticoke as loading place, went northward through Wilkes-Barre and, by way of Seneca Lake, to Buffalo, and southward to Havre de Grace, Maryland, and via the Chesapeake Bay to Baltimore and Delaware City. In 1832 the state completed the Delaware Division Canal along the west bank of the Delaware to handle larger boats from the Lehigh Valley.

Two New Jersey canals, the Morris, and the Delaware and Raritan, owed their existence to anthracite. The Morris, extending across the northern part of the Garden State, started at Phillipsburg and terminated at Jersey City and New York harbor. The Delaware and Raritan, connecting America's two leading seaports, and running between Bordentown and New Brunswick, had as its main function the shipment of anthracite to New York and New England.²

In the first dozen or more years of the canal era, anthracite destined for points on tidewater beyond Philadelphia was transhipped and forwarded by sailing vessels to New York, Baltimore, Boston, and other seaports. In 1839 sixty-ton boats equipped with covered hatches and otherwise fitted for coastal navigation were put into service by the Schuylkill Navigation Company. They were known as "Packer boats," because they were designed and built by Asa Packer of Mauch Chunk, once a boatman on the Lehigh Canal, who became prominent as a coal operator and builder of the Lehigh Valley Railroad. Packer boats, in strings of fifteen or more, were towed by steam from Philadelphia to Bordentown, New Jersey, western terminus of the Delaware and Raritan Canal, and from there they went through separately to New York Harbor.³ And Baltimore, connected with this group of artificial waterways by the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal, obtained much of its early anthracite by water.

The origin of the Schuylkill Canal is traced to a stormy meeting of German settlers in Reifsnyder's tavern in Orwigsburg, then the county seat of Schuylkill County. The year was 1813. Some saw advantages in building a canal to Philadelphia, while others were opposed. "What, spoil our shad fishing, damage our farms, ruin the stage coach business?" they demanded. But the ayes had it, and a petition went off to the Pennsylvania Legislature.⁴

On March 8, 1815, Governor Simon Snyder signed an act incorporating the Schuylkill Navigation Company. In view of abortive

efforts elsewhere, the Legislature tried to insure completion of the canal by requiring that its construction be started simultaneously from both ends of the route. The canal was to be constructed in two parts: between Philadelphia and Reading; and from the mouth of Mill Creek, above Pottsville, to Reading. Nearly half of the waterway would be through pools or dams, termed "slackwater navigation."

A mountain blocked the path of the canal near Auburn, Schuylkill County. The problem was solved by digging a tunnel 450 feet long under the mountain, the first tunnel in the United States. The year was 1818. While canal boats were poled through the cut, mule teams went overhead. This was considered one of the engineering wonders of the day, and many tourists from all over the East came to see it. The top of the tunnel was shaved off in 1855.

In 1824, when the canal was nearly completed, its first major disaster occurred. Its water escaped through fissures in the limestone at Reading. The leak was eventually stopped with planking, but a new route had to be dug through the city.

The first large shipment was made in 1822, when the canal was still unfinished. Twenty-one arks, each carrying two hundred bushels of coal from Pottsville, were taken to tidewater under considerable difficulty. Boats were propelled through the water by strong men who walked on shore hauling a long rope, one end of which was tied to a boat and the other to a stout club pressing hard against the chest. Mules supplanted men as pulling power when the Schuylkill Canal finally was opened on May 20, 1825, just ahead of New York's Big Ditch. Thus it was America's first commercial canal.⁵

That portion below Reading became known as the "Girard Canal," in honor of the great Philadelphia merchant and banker, Stephen Girard, who had invested \$56,000 in its construction. Girard later took a first lien mortgage on the company for \$230,000, which was used to complete the section between Hamburg and Reading. This made Girard one of the biggest investors in this canal.⁶

There were many other stockholders, however, as the waterway had required more than \$1,800,000 even before it was completed.⁷ Actually, the canal stock was widely held among families of limited means, many of them Pennsylvania Dutch, through whose villages the artificial waterway coursed. Hard to sell in the beginning, this stock was eagerly sought by the frugal folk living along the canal from Pottsville to Philadelphia when they saw with their own eyes the heavy anthracite traffic moving out into the world daily. The

canal enjoyed great prosperity between 1835 and 1841, and it paid high dividends. In 1835 the dividend was fifteen per cent. Four years later it rose to nineteen per cent!

The Schuylkill Canal, in large measure, was a Pennsylvania Dutch enterprise. It was dug through Pennsylvania Dutch farms. Pennsylvania Dutch dollars contributed to its financing. Pennsylvania Dutch brains and brawn participated in the actual construction. As soon as the canal started operating, many Pennsylvania Dutch farmers, millers, masons, carpenters, blacksmiths, and unskilled laborers applied for jobs as boat and dock builders, boatmen, and lock tenders. Yet a farmer seldom sold his fields when he went into canalling, railroading, or mining, especially if the land had been inherited from an eighteenth-century ancestor. Whether it was family pride or caution, he held on to the old deed, leaving his wife and children to look after things in his absence. Even when land ownership was not involved he was reluctant to pull up roots for good.

Schuylkill County's Pennsylvania Dutch regarded the canal, the railroad, and the anthracite mining industry as more or less integrated and interdependent, and as long as employment opportunities remained there was a constant movement from one industry to another.

JAKE KRAMER, THE GIANT

The reciprocal relationship among the canals, railroads, and mines can be illustrated by a brief history of the Kramer family of Berks and Schuylkill Counties—told by a present-generation descendant, Kenneth L. Kramer, a native of Tamaqua, Schuylkill County.

The family's progenitor, Henry Kramer, immigrated from Germany in the middle of the eighteenth century and served as a captain of militia at Reading during the Revolutionary War. A towering figure, he required an extra-large horse when traveling. After the war he moved from Reading to Auburn, Schuylkill County, where he farmed and reared a very large family. He was married three times, each marriage producing many children. His third wife was still adding to the number of little Kramers when he was in his seventies.

Henry's son, Jacob Kramer (Kenneth's great-grandfather), was born

on the family farm at Auburn on April 1, 1813. Even more than his father, Jacob—

[He] doth bestride the narrow world
Like a colossus.

He was six feet, ten inches tall and weighed more than three hundred pounds. In 1836 he married Catherine Leshner by whom he had eleven children. He was the Kramer family's first canaller and his giant-like stature made him an object of great curiosity. He was captain of his own canalboat, but as the largest man on the canal he was always in demand at ceremonials for christening new boats. When word spread that "Jake Kramer, the Giant" would be there a crowd was sure to gather.

One of his sons, Charles (Kenneth's grandfather), born in 1856, was the first of the Kramer family to become a railroader. He worked on the Reading and at different times made his home in Frackville, Newberry, and Tamaqua, all on the Reading route.

Charles's son, Harry Jacob (Kenneth's father), was the first of the family to break into anthracite mining. Born in Frackville on September 9, 1886, at an early age he became a breaker boy at Mahanoy Plane. Still in his teens, he was apprenticed to the colliery blacksmith for working underground. When the family moved to Tamaqua, he got a job as a machinist in the Reading Railroad shops where he continued working many years. He died in 1942.

Kenneth Kramer, his sole survivor, was out of the same giant-like mold as his Kramer forebears. He is six feet, four and a half inches tall and weighs 240 pounds. Kenneth was related to the late George "Corks" Kramer, well-known coal miner folk minstrel of Ashland, who wrested the jig-and-clog dancing championship of the anthracite region from the late Patrick J. "Giant" O'Neill in 1896, and tied him in a return match at Allentown forty years later. On his mother's side, Kenneth Kramer's grandfather was William J. Huckey. Born in Port Clinton, Schuylkill County, on June 4, 1845, he was of Swiss descent.

Grandfather Huckey was a canaller in his youth and a railroader in the latter part of his career. He also fought in the Civil War as a volunteer from Schuylkill County. On the Schuylkill Canal he started as a mule driver and later became bowsman. He played the banjo and enjoyed singing as the canalboat crawled along the narrow

waterways. After the war he wandered around the country making a precarious living as a minstrel show and vaudeville performer. "Most of the jokes I still find useful," recalled Kenneth Kramer, "I picked up from going to Philadelphia and New York with him when I was a little shaver of six to ten."

During Kenneth's growing up he saw much of Grandfather Huckey, and liked to listen to his stories, especially those about his Schuylkill Canal experiences. The old gentleman was a gifted storyteller. Kenneth believed everything he told him, including the tall tales—with one exception. Grandfather Huckey gave a vivid description of stars falling on the countryside through which his canalboat happened to be passing.

"Stars?" asked Kenneth questioningly.

"So help me, Kenny," the old gentleman insisted with conviction. "Them were stars, real stars, and I had a devil of a time sweeping them off the deck yet."

Kenneth had reservations about that tale until many years later when he read of a shower of meteorites having fallen at the time and place when Grandfather Huckey had seen the shower of "stars."

Grandfather Huckey's brother, Samuel, became bald prematurely, which changed his entire outlook on life. He was never again to be seen on the street or indoors without a hat or cap. He bid adieu to the fair sex, and remained a bachelor to the end of his days. He stepped out of his home in Tamaqua only to go to work on the Reading Railroad. Though devout, he cut himself off from church life, just to avoid baring his bald spot. He was Tamaqua's best known recluse—with a hat on!

The most stable and ambitious group of canallers was the so-called rivermen. To them the Schuylkill Canal was a means of getting to New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and other harbors. At the opening of the canal season each spring, they would take out their loads of anthracite and not return home until late in the fall. The intervening time was spent in harbor transportation, which was more lucrative than canalling. The river boatman seldom left his vessel in the day, and at night he was lulled to sleep by the lapping of the harbor water against the boat. He liked that familiar sound and could not fall asleep without it, even in his own home. One of these rivermen lived in Schuylkill Haven. One night—it was past midnight—his next-door neighbor was awakened from a deep sleep by the

sound of splashing water and got up to investigate. He found the river boatman's three sons throwing pailfuls of water at the house in relays.

"Where's the fire, boys?" he asked sarcastically.

"Pop's just come home," explained one of the sons. "He's been sleeping on the harbor all summer and, when he got in, he complained he couldn't sleep so well on land. So we have to stay out all night already throwing water up against the house."

THE INDEPENDENT BOATMAN

The independent boatman owned his own vessel which, however, was subject to company inspection. The independent also owned the team of mules that pulled the boat; and he hired his own bowsman and mule driver. As captain he was at the tiller steering. A short distance from the lock he would sound a horn or a sea shell, called a conch, warning the lock tender to prepare the chamber of the lock. At a certain point the mules were halted, the towline hauled aboard, and the boat glided into the lock under its own momentum. The crew always tried to bring the boat into line with the lock to avoid unnecessary bumping. The boat was brought to a dead stop by the bowsman pulling the heavy snubbing line ashore and taking a turn around a snubbing post. There was much danger in this procedure, especially at night. When a boat crashed against the lock wall the resultant shock sometimes catapulted the bowsman into the lock, ahead of the entering boat. Being squeezed to death was a fate that befell many a good man.

Some youths got their start by taking out a company boat for a season. It was easier than buying or building a new boat. But this was the avenue that brought many foot-loose and irresponsible men into the industry. Hoodlums, rowdies, and drunkards were also attracted and their goings-on gave the occupation a black eye. Having no financial stake in the industry they felt no responsibility toward it. When a company boat captain was ready to pull out at the opening of the season he was nearly always out of funds, and was grub-staked for a return trip by a storekeeper who had a company guarantee of payment (out of the captain's earnings).

Company boats bore numbers, but independent owners were free

to indulge their imagination in choosing names for their boats. Historical characters were favorites, as were the names of wives and sweethearts. There were also such droll names as "Bridge Smasher," "Jolly Boatman," and "*Lager Bier*."

A working day on a Schuylkill canalboat usually started between three and four o'clock in the morning when the crew awoke to perform routine chores. The bowsman cooked breakfast while the driver fed, curried, and harnessed his team. Kenneth Kramer recalls a favorite expression of Grandfather Huckey in this connection: "Gear up your team fust; then you'll get your breakfast." This was a captain's order to his driver boy and the Kramers heard it repeated so often that it has become a family tradition.

Usually by four o'clock the boat was in motion. If it was still dark the boat's "nighthawk" (kerosene lamp) at the bow was lighted; the driver on the towpath started his mules, and another workday on a canal started. From then on until the craft was tied up for the night, the boat was always on the move, except for the times that it was being locked from one level to another. For the little mule skinner, some of whom were only nine or ten, it meant walking for as many as twenty hours—often barefooted—with breaks for meals. About twenty-five miles a day was a fair rate of progress.

Mule teams on the Schuylkill Canal generally consisted of a leader, a middle, and a shafter. The forward mule led and pulled, the middle just pulled, and the shafter had the hardest job. A canalboat tended to draw the shafter toward the canal. Pulling sideways, it was the shafter's task to keep the other two mules from falling into the water. The driver boy, walking behind the team, was responsible for keeping all three mules in line. Drivers became so proficient with their long lash that they could flick a fly from the leading mule's ear. They seldom whipped their mules severely. On the contrary, they showed them lots of affection. More than one homesick driver boy snuggled up against a mule in the dark for comfort and security.

CANAL FEUDS AND PIRACY

Nor were mule drivers effeminate. The late John B. Bowman, who grew up with them in Schuylkill Haven, can vouch for that. "I recall when Schuylkill Haven established a school for boat boys, segregating them from the rest of us," he reminisced. "The teacher's

name was Helm or Helms. It's hard to recall just what they did to him, but [it must have been] plenty. The boys were big and rough. Among other things, J.R. held the teacher out of the window by the seat of his pants. The school wasn't a success; [it] was closed, but the next winter we had them with us again, and I had the pleasure of seeing 'Shivery' Reed chew 'Piggy' Frey's ear. They looked more like men than boys; [they] were fighting out old canal feuds."

"Fighting out old canal feuds" was a common custom. The fist was the symbol of power on the canal. Nobody ever thought of hiring a lawyer. All disputes were settled with bare fists by both boys and men. A fight was not considered over until one or the other of the fighters had had enough, or was stretched out cold on the ground. There were no rules; eye gouging, biting an enemy's ear off, or kicking him in the face or abdominal area were permissible.

There was a place in Schuylkill Haven where more quarrels originated than anywhere else, and old-timers remember it as "Quarrelly Point." It was located at Lock No. 14, kept by Mom and Pop Geiger, the most popular couple on the canal. This was the first lock out of Schuylkill Haven and the last one in on the homestretch, and so there was considerable maneuvering for position among canalboat captains. Tension inevitably built up during long waits, and for want of anything better to do they exchanged profanity and insults, and started fights that had to be finished elsewhere.

Incidentally, Mom and Pop Geiger were subjects of many anecdotes. One of the stories tells of a driver naming his mules "Mom" and "Pop" as an affectionate tribute to the Geigers. At Catfish Dam the Mom and Pop mules walked in the shallow water of the spillway, while the driver, Charlie Kline, walked on the plank at the side of his team. The plank happened to sway and Charlie, in trying to balance himself, accidentally hit the Mom mule in the ribs. Mom promptly kicked him into the water.

There was another kind of violence—piracy. Canallers were at the mercy of shallow-water pirates. To reach their destination with cargoes intact they had to be prepared to fight; yes, even for their lives. Their slow-moving boats were an easy prey of city gangs like the notorious Schuylkill Rangers of Philadelphia who traveled in packs, attacking the innocent and the defenseless. A canalboat crew of three—captain, bowsman, and mule driver—had no chance of successfully resisting a pack of a half dozen or more of these criminals, and resistance was not tried often.

On at least one occasion in Philadelphia, however, the Schuylkill

Rangers found that a Pennsylvania Dutchman can take so much and no more. Peter Berger of Cressona, Schuylkill County, captain of the canalboat, *Rattlesnake*, was suddenly attacked by a gang of Schuylkill Rangers. In this Dutchman the gangsters had struck a Tartar. Among his fellow canallers, Berger had a reputation as a fighter, one who was as quick with a knife as with a pistol, when attacked.

The night Berger and his bowsman, Ed Heiser, were pounced upon by Schuylkill Rangers, Berger whipped out a pistol and shot one of them dead. This unexpected defense scared the rest of the toughs away. Berger and Heiser were arrested by the Philadelphia police and brought before a magistrate who freed them on the grounds of justifiable homicide, remarking, "Your pistol did not work well this time. You only killed one man." The mayor of Philadelphia awarded Berger a new revolver in recognition of his heroic defense against overwhelming odds.

After the Civil War, the Schuylkill Canal quieted down somewhat. Many canallers had gone to war, leaving their wives in charge of their boats. When they returned they found that their wives liked the life and were determined to stay on. Thus canalling became more and more a family affair. A captain's wife not only cooked but took her turn at the tiller. A common sight along the canal of a Monday morning was the family wash strung out above deck drying, before ironing that same afternoon.

Music was part of the canallers' life, as old-timers like Grandfather Huckey liked to recall. Canalboats carried fiddles, banjos, guitars, accordions, harmonicas, and other musical instruments. As the canalboat moved slowly, and when there were no chores below or above deck, a member of the crew might sing or play an instrument to while away the long hours.

More often gay moments were spent in a canalside saloon during transportation delays of one kind or another, especially on weekends. The canal observed the Sabbath by shutting down all business; the locks were closed and no boats moved, but saloons were open for those who preferred them to church attendance.

Jig dancing, fiddling, ballad improvisations, and tall story telling were enjoyed in saloons—after the men rid themselves of inhibitions through strong drinks. They would buy applejack at twenty-five cents a gallon and would pass the jug around for individual swigs, or they might line up at the bar for "black strap" (rum and molasses)

at about three cents a glass. Whiskey was equally cheap. A half pint of it cost only a fip (six and a half cents). Under the influence of this poison anything could happen—and often did. Usually, however, it was harmless fun.⁸

There was also music in the pleasant, tinkling sound made by the little bells attached to the mule team's harness as the boat glided by farms and villages. It was like the arrival of company to Pennsylvania Dutch farmers working in the fields. The latter would pause in their labors, wave, smile, and exchange pleasantries with the passing boatmen in the Pennsylvania Dutch dialect.

Another type of music was made by canalboat captains blowing their long tin horns to announce their return home. Approaching his canal haven, a captain would be eager for a reunion with his family—

As his horn he'd blow
Waking echoes through the vales, yo ho⁹

But he awakened more than echoes, especially when other returning captains joined him. All the horns, in different pitches, would be blown in unison, waking up the town. On a clear, quiet night the notes could be heard for miles. Members of the captains' families flocked to the docks to give them a warm welcome.

The cargo was always anthracite on the outward trip. Returning boats carried a miscellaneous cargo—not merely "luxuries of every clime," as an early writer put it, but necessities for a growing population and an expanding economy—lime, iron ore, vegetables and fruits, furniture, stoves, and other manufactured articles, mainly from Philadelphia. The more thoughtful always had stowed away a few gifts bought in Philadelphia for dear ones.

OMINOUS CLOUD

Although Schuylkill Canal business was to continue booming for many years, 1842 cast an ominous cloud over it. That year the Reading Railroad opened its line to Mount Carbon, terminal for Pottsville, setting the stage for war between the Reading and the Schuylkill Navigation Company.

The canal company's answer to stiffer competition from the Read-

ing was overexpansion. Between 1855 and 1867, except for two years, the canal carried more than a million tons annually, and in the peak year of 1859 its tonnage was 1,699,000 of which 1,370,000 was anthracite. That was the year when 1,400 boats crowded the canal.¹⁰ To handle this volume more efficiently and faster as a means of meeting the Reading's growing competition, the Schuylkill Navigation Company borrowed \$3,600,000. With the new money it bought new boats and greatly increased the number of its feeder railroad cars; the locks were widened to 18 feet and lengthened to 110 feet, with a depth of 5½ feet of water; and great 900-foot loading docks were built at Port Carbon, Mount Carbon, and Schuylkill Haven, shipping points in the Pottsville area.¹¹

Meanwhile, the Reading was making improvements of its own—and taking more and more business away from the canal. Cutthroat competition was inevitable, with the advantage on the side of the railroad because of its greater speed, lower costs, and ability to penetrate more rugged areas.

The Schuylkill Navigation Company's year of reckoning was 1869. It was full of foreboding, with a series of reverses that spelled doom for the canal. A miners' strike stopped virtually all shipments of anthracite for six weeks, cutting off revenue. A drought lowered the water level in the canal so that loaded boats could not pass. Then came the rains, bringing on the worst flood in many years that wrecked locks, dams, and other canal equipment.¹² After this series of blows, the Schuylkill Navigation Company was through. There was nothing else to do but try to come to terms with its arch rival, the Reading. A deal was negotiated whereby the Reading took over the canal property under a 999-year lease in return for guaranteeing the canal's obligations. The contract was signed in 1870. Signing for the Reading was its president, Franklin B. Gowen, a name to remember in Schuylkill County history.¹³

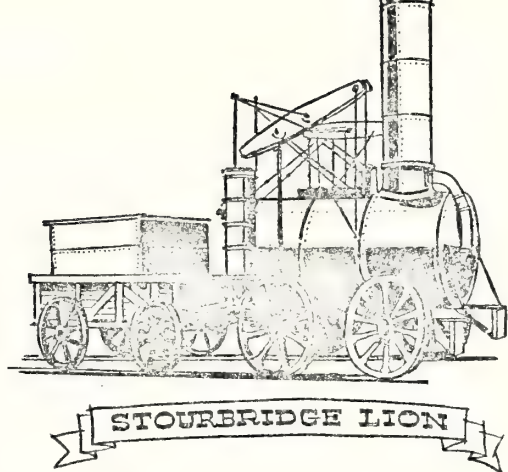
The Reading operated the waterway through a separate company, but canal transportation continued to decline. Poor business and culm deposits washed down from the coal mines brought about the abandonment of the improved Port Carbon and Mount Carbon docks, leaving Schuylkill Haven as the only major shipping point on the canal.

But it was not long before Schuylkill Haven itself was in trouble. In 1886, navigating the levels and locks above Port Clinton became difficult, which led to the abandonment of Schuylkill Haven.¹⁴ The

town, its population being mostly Pennsylvania Dutch, had been developed around the canal, and its whole economy was bound up with it. Among the jobless were many skilled workers who found employment in coal mines or on the railroad, both industries in Schuylkill County by then being under the control of the Reading. There was a period of depression and reflection before Schuylkill Haven decided that its future lay in diversified light manufacturing; and that is the way it developed.

Who was the last commercial canalboatman on the Schuylkill Canal? According to John B. Bowman, canal authority, he was John Dietrick who took on a cargo of anthracite at Kern's Dam and transported it to the State Sanitarium at Hamburg, about two miles away. His boat was the *Gwin*, and the year was 1915.¹⁵

Along the right-of-way of the former Schuylkill Canal and those of other, now forgotten, canals, scattered in remote places throughout the eastern part of the United States, the observant traveler may still find remains of that colorful era in American industrial history—sections of towpaths, a deserted lock, crumbling dams, ruins of stone-work docks, or the ribs of a canalboat rotting in a basin of stagnant water.



CRADLE OF AMERICAN RAILROADING

THE AMERICAN RAILROAD INDUSTRY HAD ITS REAL BEGINNING IN THE anthracite region of Pennsylvania, even though one or two short lines appeared earlier in other places.¹ Here, early in the nineteenth century, is where engineers pitted their genius and courage against Nature's grimmest challenges, and won. Here is where some of railroading's fundamental rules were first laid down, where new methods and techniques were hammered out, railroad customs originated, and mechanical inventions created in the solution of everyday operational problems.

The first steam locomotive to turn a wheel on the American continent—the "Stourbridge Lion"—was run in Honesdale, in 1829.² The Philadelphia and Reading Railroad in 1836 ordered the earliest wood-burning locomotives made—the "Rocket" and "Spitfire," from Braithwaite and Miller in London; the "Delaware," from Ross Winans in Baltimore; and the "Neversink," from Baldwin in Philadelphia.³

The first gravity railroad for overcoming mountain barriers was built by Josiah White between Summit Hill and Mauch Chunk in 1827. The stone ballast, now standard on nearly all railroads, was invented by Moncure Robinson, who started using it in the 1830's when he was building the Reading. On the same road, grades descended in the direction of the load, or ran at a level, with no more

abrupt descent than nineteen feet per mile. This enabled a locomotive taking a train of loaded coal cars to tidewater to return to the mining region with the same number of empties, on its own steam.⁴

Schuylkill County railroading began with Abraham Pott's feeder line which was about a half a mile in length, extending from his Black Valley mine to the head of navigation on Mill Creek. It was built in 1826 when other pioneer coal operators were still depending on teamsters to haul their coal through quagmires to the canalboats. A novelty, the Pott line attracted wide attention. Among visitors were managers of the Schuylkill Navigation Company who had boated up from Philadelphia to observe it in action. Standing on wooden rails was a train of thirteen fully-loaded cars, each holding a ton and a half of coal. When Potts hitched a horse to the leading car, the canal officers mockingly asked whether he intended "to draw a ton and a half of coal with a single horse." Their eyes popped when they observed the horse pulling the entire trainful of coal to the canal.

Pott predicted that in about ten years they would see anthracite go from these mountains to Philadelphia by railroad. This remark made them laugh. They said he must be crazy for harboring such a fantastic thought, and promised to put him away in an asylum the next time he came to their city.

The first act authorizing the construction of a railroad in Schuylkill County was passed in 1826. Within three years several other roads had been chartered, and some were already operating. Known as lateral roads, they received loaded coal cars from little feeder lines originating at the various collieries. Laterals were like turnpikes in that their charters permitted them to charge a fixed toll, usually a cent and a half per ton per mile, for the use of their tracks. They had wooden rails laid on notched cross ties with iron straps spiked to the rails. Built to carry coal exclusively, they followed the most direct and feasible routes between mine openings and points of shipment by water at the canal landings. A train of a dozen or more loaded cars could be pulled with ease by a team of horses or mules.

FEEDER AND LATERAL LINES

Lateral railroads were built originally to accommodate the Schuylkill Canal with a coal tonnage from the district south of Mine Hill

and east of the West Branch of the Schuylkill River, covering an area of about seventy square miles. With the continued growth of the mining industry, however, to and beyond Broad Mountain, these railroads from time to time were extended, penetrating numerous local coal basins of the Southern and Western Middle Coal Fields, touching parts of the counties of Schuylkill, Columbia, Northumberland, and Dauphin. By merger or lease all were destined to become the oldest links on the Reading line.

Each has an interesting story behind its origin. The most important was the Little Schuylkill, about twenty miles long, connecting Port Clinton on the Schuylkill Canal with Tamaqua, center of rich coal deposits.

The history of this short line revolves around a fascinating personality, that of Frederick List. His book, *The National System of Political Economy*, is ranked with the half-dozen most influential works in the entire field of economics.⁵ His influence upon Germany and the United States has been great. In his lifetime Germany persecuted and exiled him for his liberal thoughts, and since his death it has glorified him in word, poem, and marble to recapture his greatness and establish it as German. America gave him freedom of speech and a national forum for his political and economic ideas that enabled him to rise in the 1820's as a pre-eminent advocate of the protective tariff, a leading lecturer on the importance of industry as a necessary complement to agriculture in the building of a great nation, and just about the best salesman in the United States and abroad of the value of Pennsylvania anthracite as a fuel for heat and power.

A political exile from his native Württemberg, Frederick List became editor of a German-American newspaper, the *Readinger Adler* (Reading Eagle), in August, 1826. Although only a four-page paper at the time, it had great influence under List's informed and vigorous editorship.⁶ And while still editor of the *Adler* he became interested in the coal lands of neighboring Schuylkill County. After some explorations he discovered an outcropping of anthracite along the Little Schuylkill River near the present Tamaqua, which proved to be a rich deposit. He bought adjoining tracts with an idea of opening a mine.

But that whole area still lacked transportation. Neighboring coal-land owners had obtained a charter, signed by Governor J. Andrew Shulze, in 1826, to build a canal under the name of "Schuylkill East

Branch Navigation Company," but that effort had come to naught.

List believed that a railroad offered a greater possibility than a canal of getting the coal out to the markets, and at his suggestion the shareholders had their charter amended permitting the construction of a railroad. List assumed leadership in organizing a new company, Little Schuylkill Navigation, Railroad and Coal Company, in 1828. This was largely a Reading town enterprise with most of the shareholders List's friends and neighbors. Dr. Isaac Hiester, Reading physician, was elected president and List, vice-president, and a member of the original board of managers.⁷

List's own coal lands and ten other tracts to which he had taken title from individual owners were transferred to the new company on November 7, 1829. Subsequently, the company held ten thousand coal-bearing acres—eight thousand more than its amended charter allowed.⁸

To construct the Little Schuylkill Railroad required much more capital than had been raised in the borough of Reading. Frederick List again assumed leadership as a fund raiser, turning his attention to Philadelphia whose Chestnut Street was then the financial capital of the young nation. He concentrated on the richest man in America, Stephen Girard, whom he had met through General Lafayette, and a lengthy correspondence ensued between these two celebrated immigrants, one from France, the other from Germany. Girard finally advanced \$100,000 toward the construction.⁹ The railroad completed, formal opening ceremonies were held simultaneously at both ends of the line—Port Clinton and Tamaqua, on November 18, 1831;¹⁰ and the one man whose initiative and energy had contributed most to the building of this line was absent—List. He was then travelling all over Europe beating the drum for a revolutionary new fuel, Pennsylvania anthracite.¹¹

The Little Schuylkill Railroad's historic importance is set forth by Jay W. Hare, Secretary of the Reading Railroad, in his *History of The Reading*:

The Little Schuylkill Navigation Railroad and Coal Company, one of the first railroad corporations to be chartered in the State of Pennsylvania, may be said to be the progenitor of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad for, in addition to being the first railroad in the present Reading system to be incorporated, a number of gentlemen who were prominently associated with its creation were also the originators of the plan for the construction of the

Philadelphia and Reading Railroad and the prime movers in the consummation of the plan.¹²

German hero of another pioneer short line serving the anthracite industry that was also to become part of the Reading system was Christian Brobst of Catawissa, whose ancestors had settled in Berks County before the American Revolution.¹³ A farmer, miller, and community leader, Brobst lacked a formal education, but he made up for it with native intelligence and initiative. He first promoted a canal between Catawissa and Tamaqua. To build up a case before the Pennsylvania Canal Commission he kept accurate statistics of the number of coal-laden rafts and arks floating down the Susquehanna River at Catawissa as a potential source of tonnage. He also trudged through the wilderness of the Catawissa and Quakake Valleys making careful notes of the topography, and surveying the line with only a "Jacob's staff" and a homemade water level by which he sought to prove the feasibility of his proposed canal route.¹⁴

Nothing came of his canal project, however, and so he began thinking in terms of a railroad over the same general route. Once assured of the advantage of a railroad, he proceeded to hammer at the state authorities for action. As a representative from Columbia County, he succeeded in persuading the legislature, in 1828, to pass an act authorizing the Pennsylvania Canal Commission to "employ a competent engineer to make surveys and examinations between a point on the Schuylkill Canal near Pottsville and a point on the Susquehanna River between the towns of Catawissa and Sunbury as to the feasibility of building a railroad between those points."¹⁵

Moncure Robinson, who was later to build the Philadelphia and Reading and other railroads, was the "competent engineer" engaged by the commission. Going over the same ground as Brobst, but with the best scientific instruments then available, he and his surveyors found that the canal levels that the untrained Brobst had taken with his homemade instruments varied from theirs by only six feet over the entire distance between Catawissa and what is now Lofty on the way to Tamaqua.¹⁶

As a result of these surveys and Robinson's recommendations, the legislature authorized the building of a new railroad on March 21, 1831, thus making Brobst's dream come true. Construction of that road—the Schuylkill and Susquehanna—began in 1834–35 and continued until 1838 when the Philadelphia bank that had financed the work failed, and work stopped, not to be resumed until 1853 under

a new corporation—the Catawissa, Williamsport and Erie Railroad Company. The C. W. and E. surveyed a new route going to Tamanend where it connected with Frederick List's Little Schuylkill Railroad. The C. W. and E. gave up the ghost and its property was purchased at public auction by the Catawissa Railroad Company, a new corporation formed for this purpose. In 1872 it was leased by the Reading which still operates it as part of a through route between Philadelphia and Buffalo.¹⁷

There were several other coal-carrying lateral railroads worthy of mention. One of them, the Mine Hill & Schuylkill Haven, in 1831 started at Schuylkill Haven and terminated at Broad Mountain. Its first coal cars ran over the most primitive roadbed imaginable—saplings were laid on the ground as ballast. Horses drew the cars over wooden rails. The Mine Hill & Schuylkill, however, kept pace with the anthracite industry's growth in Schuylkill County and became the principal coal carrier from collieries north and west of Pottsville. In its prime, before it was merged with the Reading, it expanded westward to Pine Grove, north to Minersville through the gap of the Schuylkill River's West Branch; and across the Broad Mountain by way of the Gordon Planes into the Mahanoy Valley at Ashland. It also went through the Swatara Gap to Tremont, Donaldson, and other points in the West End. Everywhere along its right of way it picked up coal cars from smaller feeder lines.¹⁸

The Schuylkill Valley Railroad, completed in 1829, started at Port Carbon, one of the chief shipping points on the Schuylkill Canal and terminated at Tuscarora. Fifteen feeder lines from as many mines intersected it along a ten-mile route.¹⁹ Another 1829 short line, the Mill Creek Railroad, extended from Port Carbon to the vicinity of St. Clair, about four miles up the valley of Mill Creek, giving transportation service to drifts along its route.²⁰

Canals gave way to railroads in the anthracite region because of the mountain problem. Even railroads could not surmount some of the higher ascents. These barriers were overcome by inclined planes operated by gravity and stationary engines. Nowhere else was there such a concentrated application of the principle of the inclined plane to railroad transportation as in the hard-coal fields during the nineteenth century. Loaded cars descended by gravity from the coal mine to the head of the canal. For the return trip there was a series of inclined planes, each with an enginehouse supplying the power for the upgrade haul of the empties.

Of the Delaware and Hudson gravity road a bard sang—

As long as coal was coming and the engines were in trim,
The boys would keep cars moving till the shades of night
were dim;

From Twenty-eight to Number Nine 'twas up the hill they'd go,
And then descend the Moosic to the level far below;
By gravity to Honesdale, from the old Waymart they would run,
And take all kinds of weather till another day was done.²¹

The D. & H. gravity railroad was built for the transportation of coal from Carbondale to Honesdale. In 1829 it was extended from Carbondale to Valley Junction, a distance of thirty miles, utilizing twenty-eight planes. In 1850 another gravity railroad connected with the D. & H. canal. Built by the Pennsylvania Coal Company, it hauled Wyoming Valley coal from near Pittston to the canal station at Hawley on the Lackawaxen River.

Three gravity roads served the Lehigh Canal, all designed by the late Josiah White, engineering genius of the Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company; the Switchback Railroad between Summit Hill and Mauch Chunk built in 1827; the Ashley Planes on the Lehigh and Susquehanna Railroad (later merged with the Central Railroad of New Jersey) which closed a twenty-mile gap between White Haven, terminus of the Lehigh Canal, and Wilkes-Barre; and the Rhume Run Railroad, built in 1830 to convey coal from newly developed mines at Nesquehoning to the shipping point at Coalport on the canal.

In 1855 the Mine Hill & Schuylkill Haven Railroad completed its Ashland extension by which it gained access to the rich coal deposits in the Mahanoy Valley lying north and west of Pottsville. This was done with two inclined planes at Gordon having a combined length of about two miles by which the crest of Broad Mountain was crossed with a total lift of 717 feet.²²

Inclined planes conjure up the legendary name of Stephen Girard, Philadelphia financier and founder of Girard College. As receiver of the First United States Bank, Girard handled a bundle of deeds covering a large body of undeveloped anthracite lands formerly owned by the Revolutionary War patriots, Robert Morris and John Nicholson, in Columbia and Schuylkill Counties. The bank held a mortgage on these lands, and when Morris and Nicholson failed in great land speculations, it foreclosed.²³

Girard purchased the deeds at a public sale on April 17, 1830, thus coming into possession of 29,494 acres—about fifty square miles—

for which he paid at the rate of a dollar an acre. The lands were sparsely settled by Pennsylvania Dutch squatters who held color of title by undisputed occupancy for more than twenty years. To settle their claim, Girard paid an additional \$145,000, running the price up to the equivalent of six dollars an acre, which approximated the land's appraised value. Even at that it was a fabulous bargain in view of the millions of dollars in coal royalties that were to flow into the coffers of the Girard Estate for a century or more.²⁴

Did Girard see his vast coal lands? In the Mahanoy Valley there is a tradition that he lived for a time in a large mansion on Mahanoy Avenue in Girardville and thus was in a position to have seen them. He died on December 26, 1831, more than a year and a half after taking possession, and thus had the time to inspect them. On the other hand, there is no concrete evidence to prove that he visited his property. He did not really have to see the lands to know their potential value, as he already knew that from the exhaustive survey, map, and report made for him in 1830 by Charles Lyon Schlatter, John Thompson, Enoch Lewis, and Thomas Baird, all eminent surveyors of their day.²⁵

To develop his property in the wilderness, Girard invested heavily in the stock of the Danville & Pottsville Railroad. Two sections only were completed before the railroad company collapsed in the depression following the 1837 panic. One section became the Shamokin Branch of the Pennsylvania Railroad, while the other, long referred to as the "Girard Road," was operated for a few years transporting coal from Mahanoy Valley collieries to the head of canal navigation near Pottsville. The latter had six inclined planes, four of the self-acting type (by which empty ascending cars were hoisted by descending loads) between Port Carbon and Frackville; a fifth plane between Montgomery (now Gilberton) and Girardville; and the sixth, along the southern slope of Broad Mountain, between Frackville and the Mahanoy Valley. This last plane was powered by a stationary engine built by a Pottsville mechanical engineer whose Pennsylvania Dutch family, the Snyders, had given the anthracite industry and the state many distinguished engineers. The five other planes were operated by horse- and mulepower with small wooden cars hardly larger than ordinary wheelbarrows. The cars ran on wooden rails covered with flat straps of iron.²⁶

In 1854 several of Girard's French heirs came to Schuylkill County to develop that portion of the coal-land property awarded to them by the courts. Accompanying them was a force of French workers

who built homes, stores, and other buildings in two villages called Girard Manor and Valencia. They failed as coal operators, but were successful in disposing of the timber. The little French colony somehow did not get along with its Pennsylvania Dutch neighbors "owing to their repugnance to the Pennsylvania German dialect." So they sold out in 1864 to State Senator William L. Norbert and moved away.²⁷

Among the Pennsylvania Dutch generally, Stephen Girard long was a folk hero. His vast fortune dazzled a simple, hard-working people, whose ancestors had known poverty for centuries. They respected him not only for his wealth, but also for his frugal habits and storybook virtues they believed he had. His life story was part of the folklore of the nineteenth century in Pennsylvania Dutchland. Young people were advised by their elders to emulate him if they would succeed in life. He was the subject of a widespread folk saying circulated by Pennsylvania Dutchmen: "*Der Tscho Rat waar en reicher Mann un waar so, weil er sei eegni Bissniss gemeind hot*" (Girard became a rich man by minding his own business).²⁸

In time, the name of Stephen Girard underwent changes on Pennsylvania Dutch tongues until his identity was lost altogether. His given name, Stephen, fell by the wayside, and he was referred to simply as Girard. In the Dutch dialect Girard sounds like "*Tscho Rat*."²⁹

THE READING'S GROWING PAINS

The 1837 panic that caused Girard's Danville & Pottsville Railroad to collapse piled up trouble for the infant Philadelphia and Reading Railroad then undergoing construction between Philadelphia and the borough of Reading. Time and again funds that should have been used to pay salaries and wages had to be diverted toward the payment of pressing bills and the redemption of attached property. By 1843 and 1844 creditors had grown tired of settling their claims by accepting the company's bonds and notes, and were slapping it with judgment after judgment. It was not uncommon then for a sheriff to seize the locomotive and cars when a Reading train pulled into a station, and put them up for sale to satisfy creditors' claims. Company lawyers spent much of their time traveling to different points on the line to try to head off

these public sales, or to halt them with promises of payment of part of each claim.³⁰

The Reading had been planned as a double-track railroad, but with money scarce, the company decided to lay a single track and wait for several years' earnings before putting down the second track. During this period, and before the telegraph was installed, frequent delays created confusion in schedules. Trains would wait on sidings a prescribed length of time to allow trains from the opposite direction to pass them. Then they were permitted to run on to the main line and proceed on their way by "running the curves." This was a situation in which a crew member would run at least a quarter of a mile ahead of his train around every curve in the track to avoid collisions. Two or three coal trains at a time ("coalies," they were called) were dispatched from the mining region at a precise time every day. The last departing train would carry a white circular signal called a "ball" that had to be displayed prominently at all times to every station and train that it passed. This signal indicated that the track was clear.³¹

The Reading could have used a good public relations man in those pioneer days because it was in hot water continually. When the construction crew reached the Perkiomen and Reading Turnpike near Pottstown and began to make a crossing, they were stopped by agents of the turnpike company. Three different attempts were made to stop their work and each time the railroaders fought back with their fists. On the third attempt of May 5, 1837, two of the Reading's laborers and an assistant engineer were thrown into jail.³²

Nor did the Conestoga wagoners, who used the turnpikes as much as anybody, like the growing competition from railroads. This is expressed in their well-known ballad of protest—

Come all ye bold wag'ners turn out man by man,
That's opposed to the railroad or any such a plan;
'Tis once I made money by driving my team,
But the goods are now hauled on the railroad by steam.³³

The strongest opposition, however, came from canal interests that were very powerful between 1835 and 1845. Canal shares were a favorite investment, and thousands of people made their living from canals in one way or another. The canal companies had viewed with increasing alarm the spread of railroads, and when it was proposed to parallel the Schuylkill Canal, the most important and profitable

in all Pennsylvania, with a railroad, every kind of weapon was resorted to, to stop it.

When the time came to double-track, the Reading sought capital abroad. Robert McCalmont of the London banking firm, McCalmont Bros. & Company, came to Pennsylvania to investigate. Immediately after his arrival he was interviewed by Schuylkill Navigation Company managers who tried to argue him out of lending the Reading a large sum of money for double-tracking. Their argument was that the 300,000 to 400,000 tons of coal a year to be carried over the double tracks would wear out the rails in three years. Then, they argued, where would the railroads be?

McCalmont heard them through in silence and then replied: "Gentlemen, you have entirely removed the only doubt I ever had of the safety of my investment. You admit in all your arguments that there are 300,000 or 400,000 tons of coal to be carried. That has been my only doubt. If the railroad can get the tonnage, I will see to it that it charges enough to buy new rails as fast as they are needed."³⁴

These were by no means all of the pioneer harassments experienced by the Reading. The borough of Reading passed an ordinance prohibiting the railroad from crossing certain of its streets. The company went to court and had the ordinance thrown out. Later the borough sought to slow down coal trains racing at the breakneck speed of from eight to ten miles an hour. This time the borough went to the legislature and had an act passed and approved on April 25, 1844, restraining the company from running its trains between Bingaman and Walnut Streets faster than three miles an hour. The penalty, a fine of five dollars or five to twenty days in jail, was enforced against the locomotive engineer who was caught violating the law.³⁵

THE SNORTS OF THE IRON HORSE

How much wood would a woodchuck chuck if a woodchuck would chuck wood? In the early days of the locomotive the ability to chuck wood was an essential qualification of a railroader. At various stations a long pile of cordwood was as much a part of railroad equipment as the passenger depot. When a tender was low in cordwood, the fireman,

engineer, and every other available member of the crew chucked wood. If the supply should run out between stations, some railroads used wooden tokens about the size of a quarter with which enginemen bought cordwood. As soon as it had received its ration of wood, the little wood-burner wheezily rumbled away on its wooden rails, trailing a pillar of smoke by day and a shower of sparks by night. In darkness the sparks lighted up the heavens like a pyrotechnic display at a Fourth of July celebration; and the same sparks burned holes in the railroaders' clothes, and seared their skin.

The earliest coal trains were hauled by a single-driver, wood-burning locomotive weighing about eight or nine tons. The firebox of some types made in England was so small that ordinary cordwood had to be cut into three lengths and split up for easier firing. Compared with the steam and diesel-electric engines of today those little wood-burners appear toylike. Yet their first appearance, in the 1830's, excited wonder among pioneers accustomed to horsepower only. Thoreau, their contemporary, spoke for them when he said:

When I hear the iron horse make the hills echo with his snort like thunder, shaking the earth with his feet, and breathing fire and smoke from his nostrils . . . it seems as if the earth had got a race now worthy to inhabit it.

That is how the Pennsylvania Dutch of Schuylkill County's West End reacted to the appearance of the wood-burning locomotive, "Judge Higgins," which drew the first train of the Schuylkill and Susquehanna Railroad (now part of the Reading system). Barney Butz was the engineer. Following is a description of the historic event:

The train carried nearly a hundred men and women, comprising officials, stockholders, and prominent citizens. At every station it was greeted by people who came from afar to see the iron monster. At Pine Grove more than a thousand people assembled near the station and greeted it by cannon fire, cheers, laudatory speeches and other attentions.

The locomotive was equipped with a deep fog horn which was blown with great frequency along the route. This later gave rise to hair-raising stories about panthers in the fastness of the Blue Mountains

The astonishment which prevailed among many of the folks when they saw the locomotive for the first time gave rise to curious speculation. It is related that some of the older residents in the vicinity of Hammond Station vowed that the inside of the engine was filled with men who provided the motive power. Others of a skeptical turn of mind, held that it was a contrivance of Satan, and

no good could come of it. It is even related that it was made the subject of prayer in some of the outlying churches by people who felt sure that the end of the world was fast approaching.³⁶

From the beginning the Reading had planned to burn anthracite in its locomotives, but it took many years of experimentation to accomplish this. The first successful anthracite-burning engine was built in Baltimore in 1855. It was a "camel-back" type named "Rausch Gap." It gave such a satisfactory performance that by 1859 there were forty-two of its class on the road, and some of its features were built into locomotives for many years afterwards. In firing it the coal was shoveled into two chutes over the fire and dropped by working a lever without opening any doors. The brake blocks were made of wood. There were two straight pumps, but no steam gauge, injectors, or blowers. The engineer was protected from the weather by side curtains, but no consideration was given to the poor fireman.

Starting in 1859, John M. Schweinhart of Pottstown drove the "Rausch Gap" for many years in the coal-train service between Palo Alto and Port Richmond.³⁷ Engineers like Schweinhart were trained in the technique of handling trains on mountain grades. It required real skill of the engineer and close co-operation of his crew to keep a train of loaded coal cars under control down a mountainside, especially in winter under icy conditions. This was long before there were air brakes and patented couplings. Hand brakes were placed on each car, and a brakeman had to work fast under dangerous conditions in tightening or loosening them. These coal trains often careened down a mountain grade so fast that the crewmen were forced to jump for their lives.

The early five ton-cars with dump bottoms sometimes opened unexpectedly while the train was in motion, dropping a trainman to a horrible death under the wheels. A twelve-inch catwalk was fastened to the dump car's edge, and a trainman had to be agile as a cat to keep from falling off a moving train, especially at night when he literally had to watch his step.

In constant danger from these and many other occupational hazards, working long and hard for low wages, lacking the protection of the law and the security of a labor organization, the pioneer railroader led a dog's life. He had no pride in his work and wore no distinctive uniform. To get and hold a railroad job he did not even have to be literate.³⁸

Nevertheless a distinct lift was felt by all Reading railroaders when

their company extended its tracks to Pottsville and the rich Schuylkill coal region. This historic event occurred on New Year's Day, 1842, and was celebrated with enthusiasm.

The event also ushered in the second period in the saga of the anthracite industry. The first period had begun with the opening of the Schuylkill Canal in 1825, which was distinguished by an air of speculation and by a delirium such as prevails in a frontier town where there is a rather sudden conviction that great natural wealth lies within easy reach. The boom of 1829 that overwhelmed little Pottsville was the very first of a series of mineral "rushes" (for anthracite, gold, silver, and oil) to rock the country and tap its natural resources in the nineteenth century.³⁹

The 1842 extension of the Reading's main line to Pottsville was followed by great physical expansion and development of both the mining and railroad industries in Schuylkill County. The feeder and lateral lines were improved—steel rails replaced the wooden stringers and strap-iron lines, locomotives were substituted for animal motive power, roadbeds were widened and strengthened—and all of them were connected with the Reading, giving it widespread coverage of a great mining area embracing Schuylkill, Columbia, Dauphin, and Northumberland Counties.

One of the most spectacular improvements was the building of a new Mahanoy Plane to replace the old "Girard Plane." The double-track roadbed ascended the southern slope of Broad Mountain from its foot in the borough of Gilberton to its summit up in Frackville. Descending empty cars and ascending loaded cars left the barneys at the foot and summit respectively, by gravity, and brakemen at each point caught them as they passed and rode them until they were safely stopped at the desired points. The first carload of coal to pass over the new Mahanoy Plane was hauled by teams from the colliery of James J. Connor, later known as the Hammond Colliery, near Girardville. It was shipped on May 30, 1862, to the Mayor of Philadelphia who presented it to the "Volunteer Refreshment Saloon," a canteen for Civil War soldier recruits.⁴⁰ Sole survivor of the ancient method of mountain climbing, the Mahanoy Plane carried most of the coal traffic from the Shamokin and Mahanoy Valleys until it was closed forever on February 25, 1932.

Another occurrence in the second period of anthracite history was the birth, in the early 1840's, of the company store, or the "pluck me," as the miners called it. Whatever its theory, in practice it reduced

itself to a device whereby the employer received two profits—one from the employee's labor and the other from the bill of goods he purchased. As early as May 20, 1843, the *Pottsville Miners' Journal* warned against this evil, saying that a "wrong and injurious system of business is being engrafted upon the trade of our business." The company store grew out of a situation in which many men of small means, bitten by the coal boom, were operating coal mines on limited capital; it served as a cushion against bankruptcy, as an easy means of raising cash, and as a chance to make a double profit—all at the expense of the miners. This grievance triggered the first miners' strike in Schuylkill County, and probably in the entire anthracite industry, during the week beginning Sunday, July 3, 1842, when 1500 miners marched on Pottsville from Minersville. "Turnout" was the term used for "strike" in those early days. But whatever the terminology, the strike gave the community a big scare. The militia was called out and some of the strikers were arrested and jailed.⁴¹ The strike was lost.

The first anthracite miners' union was organized by an English immigrant, John Bates, of St. Clair, in 1849. It sought the elimination of company store orders, higher wages, and shorter hours. It struck once, lost, and passed into history. Its successor, the Workingmen's Benevolent Association, popularly known as the W.B.A., was chartered in 1868 with John Siney of St. Clair as president. It emerged victorious from its baptism by fire in 1869; and by the end of that year it controlled some ninety per cent of anthracite production. This was the post-Civil War era, characterized by gigantic industrial expansion, when financial titans fought ruthlessly for control of natural resources, railroads, and key industries; an era marked by rampant rugged individualism—paralleled by violent strikes, riots, and bloodshed among the nation's industrial workers.

The anthracite industry at this time suffered from cutthroat competition and unstable markets which periodically would lead to overproduction, falling prices, wage cuts, and unemployment. The miners complained bitterly of starvation wages, long working hours, unreasonable dockages for impurities in the coal they sent up to the breaker, dishonesty of company checkweighmen, compulsory purchases at the company stores which overcharged them, payment in scrip by those companies chartered to issue their own paper, and favoritism and discrimination at the mines by mine bosses.⁴²

Much of the Schuylkill County trouble arose from the fact that this field suffered from several disadvantages in competition with the

rest of the industry. In the Lehigh, Wyoming, and Lackawanna Valleys, anthracite production was dominated by four anthracite railroads that owned coal lands and operated their own mines, three of them having laid their tracks so they could haul their own coal. Another big corporation, the Pennsylvania Coal Company, whose mining operations were centered around Pittston, had built a gravity railroad to Hawley, Wayne County, to ship into the New York market over the Erie Railroad, thus freeing itself of dependence on the anthracite transportation companies that were also mining competitors.

Only Schuylkill County was a haven of individual enterprise, with mining operations carried on by many small individuals or partnerships who leased their coal lands and paid coal royalties, who possessed limited working capital which often left them at the mercy of fluctuating market prices, and who had to pay transportation tolls set from time to time by the Schuylkill Canal and the Reading Railroad. They were no match for the few corporate giants that controlled the upper fields. The Reading and the canal had been chartered as common carriers without mining privileges such as those held by the northern railroad-mining corporations under their charters. Judging from the early issues of the *Pottsville Miners' Journal*, popular prejudice against the incorporation of coal mining companies in Schuylkill County had existed from the beginning of the industry.⁴³

In 1869 the Workingmen's Benevolent Association ordered a general suspension to allow surplus coal to be disposed of, but only the Schuylkill members walked out. The suspension ended with a joint agreement, the first in the industry, signed by the W.B.A. and the Anthracite Board of Trade. This agreement provided for a sliding scale to regulate wages according to the rise and fall of wages at Port Carbon at the head of the Schuylkill Canal. The basis for calculating the monthly percentages was to be three dollars a ton, the miners to receive a five per cent increase for every twenty-five cent advance in the market price above three dollars; when the price fell below the basis they were to quit work until the market had adjusted itself.

The mine workers had accepted the sliding scale in good faith as a means of stabilizing relations with their employers. Only a few months later, however, when market prices dropped, the Anthracite Board of Trade announced a cut in wages as of April 1, 1870. The men refused to take it because as they said, this was a violation of their agreement. They remained idle for four months until they

accepted the so-called "Gowen's Compromise," which provided for a two-and-a-half-dollar basis and a percentage of eight and a quarter on or off the basis.

The sliding scale drove the miners daft trying to keep an account of their earnings in the face of frequent market fluctuations. At this time a ballad, "The Sliding Scale," provided some ironic comic relief. One stanza went as follows:

And thinking that the scale would turn the men did work along
Expecting for the coming month to have eight and a quarter on,
But when the twenty-fifth did come, it was the same old tale:
To have eight and a quarter off, me boys, upon the sliding scale.⁴⁴

The third period in the anthracite saga, which began in 1871, seemed to have transformed the hard-coal fields, especially Schuylkill County, into a Brobdingnagian place where everything was done on an enormous scale by men who looked or acted like giants.

FRANKLIN B. GOWEN AT THE HELM

The biggest giant of all, accustomed to doing things in the grand manner with daring, boldness, and ruthlessness; intolerant of opposition, whether it came from his stockholders, coal dealers, competitors, customers, or employees, was none other than Franklin B. Gowen, president of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad. Prior to his election as president in 1869 when he was only thirty-four years of age, the Reading, through conservative management, had attained the strongest possible position as one of the nation's biggest and most prosperous corporations. Conservatism was foreign to Gowen's character, and what happened when he embarked on his grandiose schemes is very much the story of this third period.

Gowen learned early about the anthracite industry. He was born in Mount Airy on February 9, 1836. His father was James Gowen, wealthy Philadelphia merchant and an Irish Protestant immigrant. His mother was Mary Miller, a Pennsylvania Dutch farm girl of an old Germantown family whose progenitor is said to have come over with Pastorius in 1683. He was named for Benjamin Franklin with the order of the names reversed—Franklin Benjamin. Napoleon Bonaparte might have been a more appropriate handle.⁴⁵

Gowen attended Beck's Academy, an excellent Moravian school at

Lititz, until he reached thirteen when his formal education came to an abrupt end. He was then apprenticed to a dry goods merchant, Thomas Baumgardner, in Lancaster who dealt in the anthracite trade as a sideline. In 1852 Baumgardner sold his dry goods business to devote his full time and energy to the anthracite business.⁴⁶

Apparently it was during these adolescent years while in Baumgardner's employ at Lancaster that the future head of the Reading first learned about the anthracite industry. He learned some more in Shamokin where, at nineteen, he managed Baumgardner's anthracite-fueled iron furnace; but his first lesson as a participant in the industry came at the age of twenty-two when he formed a partnership with James G. Turner of Pottsville. Turner and Gowen took a ten-year lease beginning January 1, 1858, for the East and West Mount Laffee Collieries, a few miles north of Pottsville. But 1858 turned out to be a bad year for the anthracite trade, a risky year for two young partners with limited capital. When the 1859 coal season opened, they were without money to continue operations, and so dissolved their partnership. The sheriff sold all their property.⁴⁷

With judgments totaling twenty thousand dollars recorded against him in the Schuylkill County courts, Gowen studied law in the office of Benjamin W. Cumming in Pottsville. He was admitted to the Schuylkill County bar on May 31, 1860, and two years later was elected district attorney. Although there was considerable lawlessness, including several murders, Gowen seems to have shown a lack of interest in running down criminals, judging from the fact that there were no convictions for serious crimes, nor even arrests. After only two years in office he resigned to concentrate on his growing practice. In 1865 he became the Pottsville lawyer for the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad. The company was so pleased with his services that about a year later he was called to the main office in Philadelphia to take charge of its legal department.

In 1869 when President Charles E. Smith took a leave of absence for his health, he recommended Gowen's election as acting president of the company, and his suggestion was promptly carried out by the Board. In January, 1870, when Smith was still too ill to return, the Board elected Gowen president in his own right.

The act of going ahead with the sinking of the East Mines shaft near Pottsville against the warning of mining engineers that the Mammoth seam, the object of his drilling, lay 2,600 feet deep at this location is a typical example of Gowen's bullheadedness. This depth

made the project impracticable, they held. But not until Gowen had dropped a fortune into that big hole in the ground and his English stockholders had screamed did he abandon his pet venture. If successful he would have had the deepest mine shaft in the anthracite region—another superlative for his trophy room. As it was, he wound up with the deepest and most expensive hole in the ground, which to this day remains a monument to the industry's greatest engineering failure. Gowen's discomfiture gave the miners some laughs, one of the few reasons for hearty laughter that the dour Reading president gave them in his lifetime.

The mood of the miners is reflected in a ballad, "The Big Hole in the Ground," that circulated through the mine patches of Schuylkill County soon after the failure. The ballad opens with the following stanza:

Draw near to me, friends, form a circle around,
And join in the chorus with music compound
To the song that I sing which will fully expound
Poor Franklin B. Gowen's big hole in the ground;
Some nine years ago Mister Frank had a dream,
And when he awakened he loudly did scream,
"Skim milk for John Tucker, but I'll have the cream,
For I'll sink a big shaft to the great Mammoth seam."⁴⁸

Gowen's fertile mind teemed with ideas of expansion, consolidation, and conquest of all he surveyed in a domain ringed with the steel of the Reading Railroad tracks. With the Schuylkill Canal leased out of active competition, the Reading monopolized transportation out of the Schuylkill field. In 1871 Gowen gave a dramatic demonstration of what this meant in terms of power and control of anthracite production. There was a strike that year. To break it Gowen simply tripled the freight rates for transporting a ton of coal to Philadelphia from two to six dollars. The Schuylkill operators now could not possibly grant wage increases nor meet the strikers' other demands even if they had wanted to, without facing economic ruin. Gowen had no fear of competition from the other anthracite railroads because they were all combined in an industry-wide, price-fixing deal by prior arrangement.⁴⁹

Reflecting public opinion, the *Harrisburg State Journal* of March 10 wrote: "No such assumption of power has ever been attempted by a corporation in this or in any other country If a railroad company can advance and lower its charges for transportation at will,

then there is not an industrial operation in the State that may not be destroyed in a month."⁵⁰ When public uproar caused a legislative hearing to be held, Gowen with his legal skill and histrionic ability held the committee spellbound, and nothing came of the effort to punish him.

Raising freight rates as a means of controlling production was only a temporary expedient. Gowen had an even more effective way of accomplishing the same end; and, as he told his stockholders, this was to buy up all available coal lands in the territory served by the Reading. He did not ask the legislature to amend the Reading's charter for this purpose, which would have been the obvious step. Because of hostile public opinion, he took the devious course of having a friendly senator, on January 17, 1871, introduce a bill incorporating a new concern, the Franklin Coal Company, with power to operate its own coal mines. The bill contained a sleeper clause that would have enabled the Reading (not mentioned in the bill) to have bought out the phony corporation's stocks and bonds. Gowen's plan was exposed in the Senate and the bill was defeated.

Several weeks later virtually the same bill was reintroduced but the proposed corporation appeared under a new name, the Laurel Run Improvement Company, with broad enough powers, as pointed out by one of the representatives, to take in "the Island of Black Susan and Sandomingo." The bill slipped through the House undetected, but was defeated in the Senate, 17-15. But Gowen, then on Capitol Hill, was not dismayed. When the Senate adjourned for lunch he made the most of his opportunity to lobby for his pet measure. Whatever happened at lunch proved effective. When the Senate reconvened that afternoon, "three of the bill's opponents were conveniently absent and a fourth had changed his mind." The next day the bill was enacted on final reading.⁵¹

Another bill, authorizing the Reading to borrow an unlimited amount of money, breezed through the legislature because its members did not suspect in time that its real purpose was to provide Gowen with the funds to finance his coal-land purchases. Immediately after the law's passage, he launched a \$25,000,000 bond issue and dispatched his land agents to buy up every available piece of coal land served by the Reading Railroad. Many independent operators of marginal collieries were glad to sell their properties. Some coal lands thus came cheap, while some were bought at inflated prices as the result of competitive bidding. By the end of 1874 Gowen had ac-

cumulated nearly 100,000 acres of developed and undeveloped lands, the title of which was vested in the Laurel Run Improvement Company; and all of the stock was owned by the Reading.⁵²

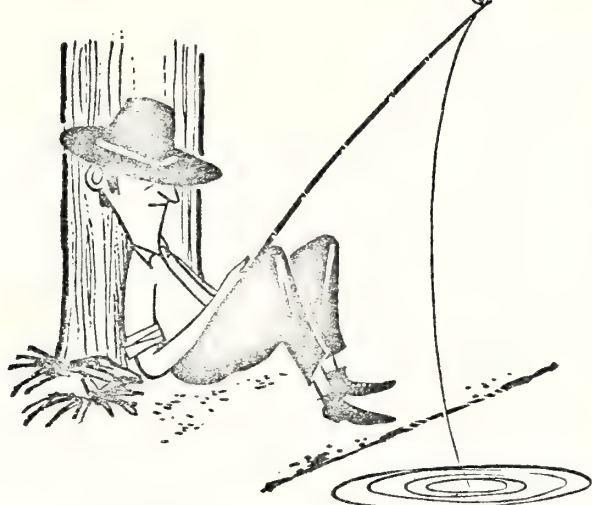
For a while after this acquisition, Gowen continued believing that free competition among Schuylkill operators would keep the price of coal down, stimulate sales, and result in more revenue for the railroad. He was later to decide that it would help reduce overhead costs if the Reading-owned collieries were operated under a single management rather than by many individuals. This marked the beginning of the end of Schuylkill's unique position as a haven of individual enterprise. Gowen acquired the leases on twenty-seven of the biggest operations and arranged to take over the other seventy-one when their contracts expired.⁵³

Expansion continued to be the watchword of Gowen's administration. His grandiose plans were carried out with incredible ruthlessness in the spirit of those "robber baron" times. He brooked no opposition whether offered by corporate competitors, retail and wholesale coal dealers, stockholders, or miners. There was no stopping him as long as the English bondholders and stockholders were willing to continue supporting him with their pounds sterling.

Gowen's thorniest opponent was the Workingmen's Benevolent Association because it insisted on fighting for the miners' rights. By sheer force of will, Gowen united his fellow coal operators late in 1874 for a showdown fight. After preparations had been made for a long suspension, the operators, early in 1875, announced deep wage cuts, which the W.B.A. refused to accept. The strike was on! Heretofore strikes had been local or sectional in scope, with one field profiting from the strike of the other. This 1875 affair, known in history as "the long strike," started with a universal suspension. Within a few weeks, however, the northern men accepted a cut and returned to work, leaving to the Lehigh and Schuylkill miners the burden of carrying on the fight. Even here "blacklegs," as strike-breakers were then called, broke the men's unity. As the strike wore on, suffering increased, especially among women and children. Finally, the strikers were willing to settle if the W.B.A. would be permitted to survive. Many independent operators were agreeable, but Gowen and some of the other corporate operators refused to accept this condition. The strike dragged on until June when it fizzled. The miners returned to the pits weakened in body from long

privation, humbled in pride, and broken in spirit. And their union was ruined.

Well, we've been beaten, beaten all to smash,
And now, sir, we've begun to feel the lash,
As wielded by a gigantic corporation,
Which runs the commonwealth and ruins the nation.⁵⁴



THE SWATARA COUNTRY

Swatara tumbling from the lofty hill
 Steals through the vale to turn the industrious mill.
 —Philip Freneau (1752-1832)

THE "SWATARA COUNTRY" IS A TERM OF REFERENCE DESCRIBING A MUCH broader area than the immediate Swatara mining district. In the interest of a clearer and more comprehensive picture of the community under focus, it is necessary to take in neighboring territory. Pine Grove lies some miles south of the West End mining field, yet in the nineteenth century it was the chief canal-and-railroad shipping center of Swatara coal, and its economy depended on the anthracite industry. Millersburg, though sixteen miles distant from Bear Gap mines, also belongs in the picture because as an anthracite-railroad terminal it was the key point on the Susquehanna River where Lykens Valley red ash coal was transferred to Pennsylvania Canal boats on the opposite side of the river. Much of Lebanon County is also in the picture as a major source of Pennsylvania Dutch labor for the Swatara coal mines, to and from which the men commuted on so-called "miners' trains."

A scientific description of the Swatara country was given more than a century ago by Richard C. Taylor, noted geologist and authority on the anthracite industry, as follows:

The area . . . comprehends seven hundred and twenty square miles, being in length forty-five miles, and width sixteen miles. It extends in breadth from four miles above Harrisburg northward to Millersburg on the Susquehanna, at the junction of the Wiconisco railroad. In length it reaches from . . . the west side of the Susquehanna to within eight miles of Pottsville. It comprises the two forks into which the Schuylkill coal-field separates, opposite to Pine Grove The northern fork or branch extends to the Wiconisco Coal Company's mines at Bear Gap, and the southern branch stretches towards the Susquehanna in a southwest direction, to within about a mile of that river¹

Backbone of the Swatara country was the Swatara mining district spread over several townships in the western part of Schuylkill County, commonly known as the West End. It has been officially described as follows:

It extends from the high land on the east, which divides the waters of the Schuylkill from those of the Swatara, to the summits on the west, which separate the waters of the Swatara from those of the Susquehanna, and from the base of the Sharp Mountain on the south, to the base of the Broad Mountain on the north. It averages about eighteen miles long by six broad, containing about one hundred and eight square miles, or sixty-nine thousand, one hundred and twenty acres of coal land.²

Geographically separated from the West End by a county line, but geologically a continuation of it, is a smaller coal field in Dauphin County known in the nineteenth century as the Susquehanna mining district which has been described in the following manner:

It is bounded on the north and west by Lykens Valley; on the south by Williams Valley, which separates the coal field into two parts; and on the east by the high land, which separates the head waters of the Swatara from those which flow into the Susquehanna. This mining district contains about thirteen square miles, being about thirteen miles long and a mile wide. The two mountains which compose this district, contain different varieties of coal, the veins in the south mountain being red ash, and those in the north white [ash]. They are separated only by a narrow valley, and they unite into one ridge about two miles from its western termination. At the place of their union, Western Bear Creek, which rises about four miles further east, and near the Dauphin and Schuylkill line, breaks through the . . . Big Lick Mountain, and runs into the Wiconisco, a tributary of the Susquehanna. This place is called Bear Gap³

The Swatara country has much in its colorful past to commend it

to the attention of folklorists, historians, sociologists, geologists, anthropologists, botanists, and genealogists. Why genealogists?

Two hundred years or more have passed since the first German immigrants settled the Swatara country. The original German settlements antedate the French and Indian War. From sprawling, sparsely-populated Pine Grove Township, now part of the West End, two companies of stalwart patriots joined the Berks County militia in the fight against the British for American Independence. Descended from those Pennsylvania Dutch ancestors are humble citizens, mostly workers, like farmers, coal miners, or ex-miners, who despite mass immigration from Europe, succeeded in maintaining their majority as an ethnic group. The Swatara country is unique in that it is the only community of comparable area in the anthracite region to have remained homogeneous throughout its history. The reason for this is simple and interesting: although English-speaking miners and those of other nationalities were employed in West End and Lykens Valley collieries, the anthracite industry drew largely on the Pennsylvania Dutch farmers within a radius of several miles to meet its labor needs.

The Swatara country, incidentally, has the distinction of being the ancestral home of the American branch of the Eisenhower family whose thousands of members, led by President Dwight D. Eisenhower, are scattered all over the United States and Canada. Their common ancestor was the 1741 immigrant from the Palatinate, Germany—Hans Nicholas Eisenhauer—who settled in Bethel Township, in what is now Lebanon County, Pennsylvania.⁴

Hans Nicholas Eisenhauer's tract of 168 acres was situated west and north of Fredericksburg, a short distance from Pine Grove. An interesting coincidence is that this land record's date, January 20, 1753, is two hundred years to the day—January 20, 1953—on which Dwight David Eisenhower, great-great-great-grandson of the family's progenitor, was inaugurated as the thirty-fourth President of the United States. Somewhere around Fredericksburg sleeps that ancestor, the time of death and place of burial unknown.⁵

Hans Nicholas Eisenhauer's eldest son, Peter, farmed in Lebanon until 1779, when he sold his property and moved farther west along the Blue Mountain in Lower Paxton Township, Dauphin County. Peter was the father of seventeen children, one of whom died in the Revolutionary War. In 1794, when Peter was 78, a son was born to him and his third wife, and they named him in memory of the soldier hero, Frederick.⁶

This second Frederick, the President's great-grandfather, seems to have had considerable initiative. He was the first to use the present form of the family name, *Eisenhower*. While still living in Lower Paxton Township, he left the Lutheran Church of his ancestors and joined the River Brethren Church, since known as the Brethren in Christ Church. He was married to Barbara Miller, and to them Jacob Frederick, the President's grandfather, was born on September 19, 1826. Four years later he moved from Lower Paxton Township to a farm in the beautiful Lykens Valley, along Route 209.⁷

Jacob Frederick was the husband of Rebecca Matter. They moved to a one-hundred-acre farm of their own that later became part of Elizabethtown. In 1854 they built a nine-room red-brick house in which the President's father, David Jacob, one of fourteen children, was born on September 23, 1863. The large house served as a family home and as a meetinghouse of the Lykens Valley River Brethren congregation of which Jacob Frederick was the preacher. Jacob and his family lived there for twenty-four years until 1878 when they moved to Kansas. Accompanying his wife and eight children was his aged father, Frederick.⁸

A bronze plaque mounted on a boulder in the front yard marks the Eisenhower ancestral home. The plaque was dedicated on Sunday, October 23, 1955, in the presence of Dr. Milton S. Eisenhower, the President's youngest brother, who is President of The Johns Hopkins University. A telegram from President Dwight Eisenhower expressed appreciation.

As early as 1770 some of the Eisenhower clan started leaving their Pennsylvania homeland, and from time to time they worked their way westward with the pioneer tide; today there are families bearing this distinguished name, with its 160 variations of spelling,⁹ in every state and in Canada. In Swatara country cemeteries sleep many of the President's ancestors who had remained in Pennsylvania or had returned to die. In the Lykens Valley are a number of living second cousins. Elsewhere in this farming-and-mining area are other Eisenhowers in every walk of life who are distantly related to him.

As geologist Taylor long ago wrote: "In point of mineral value, of geological peculiarities, of statistical intricacy, and of highly picturesque features, the Swatara country has, perhaps, no equal, within a similar area, in America."¹⁰ At least that is the way it looked more than a century ago. The Blue Mountain, though barren of coal,

played a historic role in West End history. The next range—double-crested Second Mountain—is separated from Blue Mountain by an undulating valley of varying width. Farther north, across a red-shale valley, is a third range—Sharp Mountain, or "*Schneid Baerrig*." It was named by the early German settlers to indicate the sharpness of its apex. Sharp Mountain is also interesting as the southern boundary of the entire anthracite region. It is a clearly defined dike extending across Schuylkill County from west to east with no break in the uniformity of its crest except where the Swatara Creek, the West Branch of the Schuylkill River, the main Schuylkill, and the Little Schuylkill flow through its gaps.

Enclosed in the mountain ridges were seams of anthracite sandwiched between layers of red shale and sandstone, with conglomerate rock forming a foundation for all the strata. Coal was embedded high in the ridges toward which miners climbed along mountain paths to perform their daily work in the mines.

The ridges, running parallel, or nearly so, were comparatively uniform in elevation. The derangement of the rock formations and the remarkable ramifications of Swatara Creek, the West End's principal stream and its tributaries, making numerous gaps in the coal-bearing mountains, added much to the geological interest and picturesqueness of the Swatara country.

The West End's mountain scenery is often breathtaking, especially where the Swatara and its tributaries break through to form these gaps, as in Sharp Mountain at High Bridge where Mill Creek rushes through a narrow gorge. Here the shale sides of the separated mountain rise sheer above the creek, leaving barely enough room for the stream and the narrow road to pass through.

On a clear summer day it is a delight to look out on the magnificent view that unfolds from the height of High Bridge and the promontory on its northern side. To the north is the gently sloping valley that forms the southern slope of Sharp Mountain as it ranges westwardly toward the Susquehanna. To the southeast are lovely vistas of rolling hills and valleys, the waving of grain, beautifully cultivated fields, ample barns, and neat farmhouses, the familiar symbols of Pennsylvania Dutch farming skill, thrift, and industry. Over toward the northwest from High Bridge is the "Point of Rocks," standing out in sharp relief along the ridge.

Point of Rocks, one of Nature's rare formations, is located about five miles west of Pine Grove and a short way northwest of High

Bridge. On a sunny day this high point commands a view of the Susquehanna River or the Swatara Gap in the Blue Mountain. This was a favorite Indian resort in the early days, especially during the French and Indian War when many raids were made on German settlements.

According to local folklore, Point of Rocks served as an Indian station from which, by means of signal fires, the warriors communicated with their fellow tribesmen in distant places. In those days there was an unobstructed view of, perhaps, fifty miles, which was ideal (from their standpoint) for directing concerted attacks along the line of the settlers' defenses.¹¹

Stone tomahawks, arrowheads, and other primitive implements have been recovered here. Other reminders of the Indian habitation are names on the map and Indian paths.

In making their way through the wilderness north of the Blue Mountain the first German settlers followed the red man's paths that were part of an extraordinary network of trails connecting Indian camps and villages in Pennsylvania with those in New York State and in the South. Most of them converged at Shamokin on the Susquehanna where Sunbury, Northumberland County seat, is now located. These paths were determined by the natural topography of the land. Since Indian settlements were often situated along rivers and creeks, many paths followed streams, sometimes closely, and sometimes bearing away when the going became too difficult. In the Swatara country some of these paths were very steep, indicating that the Indian preferred a short path over a hill to a longer one around it.

Many of those old paths are today part of our highway and railroad systems. The King's highway of 1769 was laid out almost exactly on the line of an old Indian path. Only minor deviations were made in crossing the mountains where easier grades were secured by going obliquely instead of directly up the steep slopes.

This was the Tulpehocken Road, oldest in the county, which was frequently mentioned in the journals of Conrad Weiser and Moravian missionaries. Now known as the Millersburg Road, it was regularly laid out from Reading to the Susquehanna by way of Womelsdorf, Rehrersburg, through Millersburg, over the Blue Mountain to Pine Grove, from where it continued northward over the Broad Mountain to Shamokin (Sunbury). From Philadelphia to the Susquehanna, this was the route of the pioneers who rode on horseback or made it on foot. It is now part of the shortest improved highway from Philadelphia, Reading, and the southeastern corner of Pennsylvania, to

Sunbury, Williamsport, the Finger Lakes of New York, and Niagara Falls.¹²

Indian paths in the wilderness between the Schuylkill River and the area west of the Swatara strongly influenced the location of the first German settlements in Pine Grove Township in the eighteenth century.

The largest tribe of Indians to roam over Schuylkill County (and the entire anthracite region) were the Delawares, or *Lenni Lenape*, meaning "real people," whose villages dotted the primeval forest. A peaceful, agricultural people, they were conquered by the powerful Iroquoian Confederacy, or Six Nations, whose council fire burned at Onondaga, New York. Derisively called a "petticoat nation," and treated with contempt as a satellite, the Delawares lost their right to wage war and sell their land. In the end they had to submit to the humiliation of having their lands sold from under them, which left them bitter and vengeful.

Another tribe were the Munsees, a Delaware subdivision with a separate dialect, who moved to Wyalusing on the Susquehanna about 1740 after losing their lands by the fraudulent Walking Purchase. Later they joined the main body of Delawares who had moved to the Ohio territory.

The Shawnee, an important Algonquian tribe, lived in the Wyoming Valley until about the middle of the eighteenth century when they, too, moved out to Ohio. Of less importance were the Nanticokes who gave their name to Nanticoke, a mining town near Wilkes-Barre.

The Delawares and Shawnees were the Indians who caused the white settlers of Schuylkill County the most trouble. Embittered over the loss of their former homeland, they became allies of the French against the English and German colonists in the French and Indian War, and many joined the British against American patriots in the Revolutionary War.¹³ They killed or carried into captivity hundreds of settlers, a large number of them German, and showed no mercy to women and children.

There were two distinct waves of Indian massacres on that part of the eastern Pennsylvania frontier where Germans were in the majority. Settlers knew them as the "First Indian War" and the "Second Indian War." In both waves the victims were nearly all inhabitants of the wilderness north of the Blue Mountain that had been opened to settlement under the New Purchase of 1749.¹⁴

After Braddock's disastrous defeat, scouts and friendly Indian run-

ners had brought warning that bands of warring Delawares and Shawnees were on their way east to join other hostile bands at Shamokin in a major attack on the colonists.

The German settlers on Penn's Creek, near the present site of Selinsgrove, Snyder County, felt the impact of the Indians' first blow on October 16, 1755. According to Provincial records, thirteen persons were murdered and twelve others were either scalped or carried away.¹⁵

Twelve days after the Penn's Creek raid, a band of Indians invaded the sparsely settled territory of what later became Pine Grove Township, and killed the wife and two young sons of Johann Peter Grafe, whose home was on the south side of the Little Swatara, about four miles east of Pine Grove. This was the first Indian massacre perpetrated in the West End of Schuylkill County. Indians continued to make sporadic raids on German settlements in this area until mid-1758 by which time virtually all survivors had taken refuge with friends or relatives south of the Blue Mountain.¹⁶

Among the German immigrant farmers harassed by marauding Indians during this period were Hans Nicholas Eisenhauer and his son, Peter, President Dwight Eisenhower's ancestors, who harvested their crops in Bethel Township under militiamen's protection. Even so, the red men inflicted much suffering. The *Pennsylvania Gazette* of August 12, 1756, reported the Eisenhauer home burned. On September 30, 1757, red men carried off five children of Peter Wampler who had come over from Germany on the *Europa* with the Eisenhauer family. On the Jacob Snavelly farm directly south of the Eisenhauers' fields, a boy was reported killed and scalped.¹⁷

The terror and anguish caused by these Indian attacks are communicated in a letter from Maj. William Parsons to Lt. Col. Conrad Weiser, written in the evening of October 31, 1755, after he had hurriedly buried the bodies of two murdered settlers to keep them from being "torn to pieces by wild beasts before the next morning."

"And now, my dear friend," continues Major Parsons, "I have given you as clear an account as I am able to do in the confusion and distress of mind that I am under. But how shall I find words to describe the confusion and distress of the poor unhappy sufferers? And if I had words my heart would burst at the description, which I therefore wave [sic]."¹⁸

A chain of forts along the Blue Mountain from the Susquehanna to the Delaware was erected by the Provincial government under the

supervision of Benjamin Franklin to counteract the type of hit-and-run warfare waged by the Indians. The forts were garrisoned mostly by Provincial troops under the command of Lieut. Col. Conrad Weiser. Many farmhouses were also used as auxiliary stations of defense, especially those between the Schuylkill River and Swatara Creek. The territory was well patrolled.

Whether deterred by this apparently impregnable defense system or not, the Indians avoided the "over-the-mountain" region for several years. The lure lured former settlers back to dangerous living again. They were reinforced by more recent German immigrants, many of them penniless.

An uneasy peace prevailed until the fall of 1763 when Indian raiders suddenly swooped down on the settlers and, amid great fury, killed and scalped many, and carried off women and children into captivity. Once more there was a thin line of confused and distressed survivors streaming back across the Blue Mountain in search of charitable friends and families.¹⁹

Long after they had vanished from Schuylkill County, the Indians continued to be the subject of conversation around the comfortable kitchen fireplaces in Pennsylvania Dutch farmhouses. Many were the stories exchanged—some humorous, some hair-raising. One concerned Minersville's myopic Town Watch who thought he saw Indians approaching, and excitedly warned his people. Leaving all but their most personal belongings behind, the frightened families fled down the West Branch Valley in the direction of Schuylkill Haven's fortified mill. One man carried his aged mother on his back until she persuaded him to hide her in the forest under cover of leaves. In the end this turned out to have been a false alarm. The Watch saw what he wanted to see—Indians. They were not Indians, however, but red-plumed troops from Fort Augusta.²⁰

Another story was about the Stevens brothers and their farm in Dreherstown. Because of the danger, the brothers worked on their farm only as long as they had to, spending the rest of the year in Philadelphia. One summer evening, while resting in their barn, a whippoorwill flew in through the door, fluttered about, and then flew out again. The brothers interpreted this visitation as an omen of imminent danger. They were right, for they had just enough time to mount their horses and escape from the Indians who set fire to their barn.²¹

Schuylkill County's last Indian was a half-breed named Big Jack

who lived in a hut on one of Pottsville's hills early in the nineteenth century. He made his living weaving baskets, which he sold in the village. It was his daily custom to stand erect in front of his hut at sunset and give out with Indian yells that could be heard all over town. When Big Jack missed this ritual one day, people investigated and found his hut empty. In the Pennsylvania Dutch idiom, Big Jack was all.²²

ALONG THE SWATARA CREEK

Indians in the flesh were gone, but Indians in the spirit lingered long in the Swatara country. In this broken, rugged ridge-and-valley region, with its giant-like trees and masses of rocks (in all kinds of fantastic shapes), its swamps and streams and all kinds of wild game, the people saw (or thought they saw) ghostly fires around which red warriors danced, as well as other disturbing visions. The area was alive with superstitions about witches, haunted places, the evil eye, and, of course, the devil. The early settlers not only brought folklore from Germany, but borrowed some from the Indians, as indicated by the Indian word *powwow*, which is used to identify a certain kind of Pennsylvania Dutch healing art.

The mountains were repositories of much of this folklore. Foremost was the Blue Mountain, which was to Schuylkill County what the Hartz Mountains were to ancient Germany—a region of legend and romance. For example, the Pennsylvania Dutch believed that on misty days the steam could be seen arising from the metzel soup cooked by demon wolves at the top of the mountain.

And in the depth of Blue Mountain, it was believed, lay buried the Sixth and Seventh Books of Moses, a volume of awful power. Originally the possession of the great magician, Cornelius Agrippa, it was brought over from Germany. A copy fell into the hands of the celebrated local wizard, Paul Heim, whose deeds of power are well known in Schuylkill County.²³

The world first learned of this fascinating region through the writings of Moravian missionaries who had passed through it on a religious mission to the Indians in the Wyoming Valley in 1742. With Conrad Weiser as guide, the Moravian travelers included Count Ludwig von Zinzendorf, world leader of the sect; John Martin Mack and

his bride; Peter Boehler; Anna Nitschmann; Henry Leimbauch; and two Indian converts, David and Joshua.

From Weiser's home in Tulpehocken (Womelsdorf), Berks County, the trail led through Rehersburg, Bethel, Fort Henry, and Pine Grove, a fact established by the late George Wheeler about twenty years ago, and not by way of Swatara Gap, the route previously accepted by historians.²⁴

On Saturday, September 25, 1742, the travelers struggled up the Blue Mountain—a thousand-foot climb up a narrow, steep, and rocky Indian path—until they reached a sparkling spring in the midst of a clearing near the summit, on what is now the Bethel-Pine Grove Road. Here they stopped to rest.

Stirred by the magnificent panorama of ridge-and-valley scenery, Zinzendorf named the spring and the clearing *Pilger Ruh*, Pilgrim's Rest. The undulating valley between Blue and Second Mountains he named "Anthony's Wilderness" in honor of his coreligionist, Anthony Seyfert, a Moravian missionary who had established Indian missions in Georgia in 1735.

Major mountains, valleys, and streams along the Tulpehocken trail already bore Indian names, but Zinzendorf could not resist the impulse to rename them in honor of friends and relatives. These Moravian names appear on an old map preserved in the Moravian national archives at Bethlehem.²⁵

Another by-product of Zinzendorf's enthusiasm was his plan of settling fellow Germans in Anthony's Wilderness. This was dangerous because the territory was still owned by the Indians, and would remain so until the New Purchase of August 22, 1749, when it was deeded to the Proprietaries of Pennsylvania. Any organized attempt to make a permanent settlement at the time of Zinzendorf's visit might have exposed his people to Indian wrath.

This "over-the-Blue-Mountain" territory was formally thrown open to settlement on March 4, 1750, the date of the first warrants for land. The same excitement that has always accompanied the opening of public lands for settlement prevailed. Some of the first warrants went to land speculators, including James and George Boone, whose brother, Squire Boone, was the father of the celebrated American folk hero, Daniel Boone; James Wilson, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence; and General Arthur St. Clair.²⁶

The majority of land seekers, however, were primarily interested in establishing homesteads for themselves and their children; some of those original farms still remain in the same families today.

Original lists of taxables preserved by the Berks County Historical Society in Reading reveal that the first white settlers of this region were Germans, and English and Welsh Quakers. According to Claude W. Unger, Schuylkill County historian, the 1752 list contains ten German names, an equal number of Quaker names, and five names of uncertain origin. The proportion of German names to those of Quakers jumps to about two to one in 1753; and to about four to one in 1754, in which year the tax lists show fifty-one families living on the Schuylkill River and twenty-eight families on the Swatara. The Quakers were not farmers, but transient timbermen and millers. After cutting down the rich stands of timber, they moved to other virgin timberlands, leaving the region to the Germans. So overwhelming was the percentage of Germans over non-Germans at this time that not a single English congregation was found within the territory prior to the time when Schuylkill County was created in 1811.²⁷

Among the pioneer Germans there were some who, prior to, and after, 1750, staked out choice lands north of the Blue Mountain before acquiring title to them. A prospective settler in the new territory would explore a favorable location, usually in a hollow and near a stream. Axe cuts on trees would mark the boundaries of his claim, and he might even build a log cabin and make a clearing. These signs of possession and habitation were respected by his neighbors as his improvement, which the Germans phonetically pronounced "prufment." Some early settlers waited until after the end of the French and Indian War before satisfying the law and obtaining clear title to their lands. Upon taking legal possession of his property, a settler threw a "grubbing frolic," in which neighbors joined in clearing the land of unwanted trees and imbibing homemade "cider ile."

Some of the early Schuylkill County German settlers came from the Tulpehocken district of Berks County by way of Swatara Gap: some by the mountain path from Millersburg (Bethel P.O.); some through the Port Clinton Gap; and some by the path from Allemangle, the present Albany Township, to the banks of Lizard Creek.

Most of the first Germans in Schuylkill County had emigrated from South Germany, from the Palatinate, Württemberg, and Bavaria. Mingled with them were also German Swiss and a minority of Alsatians and French Huguenots. The earliest Alsatians were Germans who immigrated to America to escape becoming French when their province came under French control; most of the Württembergers were religious refugees.²⁸

From its Foster Township source on Broad Mountain, to Middletown, where it finally enters the Susquehanna River, Swatara Creek is only sixty-nine miles long. Yet, flowing through broad valleys, and touching parts of Schuylkill, Berks, Lebanon, and Dauphin Counties, it drains an area of more than five hundred square miles.

Only a small part of this area lies in the Swatara mining district proper. In its upper reaches, while breaking out of the coal-bearing mountains, it makes swift descents from high altitudes, its restless waters dashing and foaming over mossy, jagged rocks, and cascading through gorges as if reveling in its wildness.

In pioneer days it was a lovely stream, clear and sparkling, and teeming with trout, bass, catfish, mullet, eels, shad, and salmon. Its very name is said to be an anglicization of an Iroquoian word, *Swahadowri*—"Where we fed on eels."²⁹

Fishing was not only a sport then, but an important element of the economy. In the spawning season, shad and salmon ascended as far north as Pine Grove, and even farther, up the Swatara. The people improvised weirs of brush and stone into which they swept the fish with brooms made of twigs. The catch was carried home where it was dressed and salted away for a season's eating.

Among the popular traditions brought from Germany was one based on the belief that on Ascension Day fish went upstream for spawning, making them easy to catch. Ascension Day, then, was given over to fishing. The early settlers started the day with attendance at church, but this phase of the holiday had been discontinued by 1830 when the mining era began.³⁰

One of the most attractive fishing spots was in the vicinity of Swatara Falls where the stream drops about three hundred feet in a half of a mile. In the early days it was accessible only by a stony path over the mountain, about a mile off the road. The effort of reaching it was compensated for by the sight of limpid waters falling over upright rocks between enormous boulders overhanging the pool beneath, with the feathery spray falling lightly all about the place.

Swatara Falls, alas, lost their pristine purity and beauty soon after coal mining began in the vicinity. Swatara Slope No. 1 was sunk on the east bank of the creek about a half of a mile south of the falls, and Swatara Slope No. 2 was put down directly above the cascades, disfiguring the graceful symmetry of the landscape and denuding its abundant greenery. East of the falls, a mine village, Swatara, was erected for the miners and their families.

Family fishing in the Swatara Creek on Ascension Day was observed as an annual event so long as there were live fish to catch. The flood of 1850, however, by washing large quantities of coal refuse from the Lorberry collieries into the stream, marked the beginning of its disintegration. In time a yellowish scum, which was poison to the fish, coated the creek bed. When coal breakers added their own form of pollution, the Swatara Creek turned inky black and choked all approaching fish. As long as mining continued in the area, the creek was a running eyesore, an abomination to mankind, and a blasphemous thing.

To the miners this represented a great frustration, for fishing has always been one of their main sports. They continued observing Ascension Day as a fishing day, but had to go outside the mining region to find pure streams. In the Swatara country and other parts of the anthracite region, in the Pennsylvania Dutch counties, and even in (West) Germany, Ascension Day is still observed as a holiday, but without its former religious connotation.

The washing of fine coal into the Swatara was not without its profitable effect, for, in the latter part of the nineteenth century, the poor and frugal would spend their summers picking coal out of the creek in Pine Grove and other towns along its course. This activity developed into a new industry in which heavy machinery was used to dredge up creek coal, a product still in demand. This was true not only in the Swatara but in other creeks and rivers throughout the anthracite region.

The Swatara's industrialization set in quite early in history. The first gristmill on the Little Swatara, a branch, was built by Casper Bretzius near the village of Rock even before the American Revolution; the mill, a one-story log house, produced grain for Washington's troops at Valley Forge.³¹

The Berks County tax list for 1779 shows that Pine Grove Township, then still a part of Berks, reported one tannery, two gristmills and nine sawmills.

Next to farming, lumbering was the main business activity. The valleys between the Blue and Sharp Mountains were clothed with stands of virgin timber; early travelers observed and noted such trees as white oak, fern, chestnut, white pine, poplar, spruce, maple, birch, and hemlock.

Sawmills met local needs, but also shipped large quantities of logs as well as cut timber. The timber was "rafted in"; that is, lashed

together in rafts and floated downstream on high water in the spring and fall freshets. Rafts had a long oar at each end for steering in the swift current. The Pennsylvania Dutch raftsmen recognized the signs of rising water, for which they waited anxiously. When they had their favorable rise they would fill their knapsacks and set out on what was often a hazardous journey downstream to Jonestown in the Lebanon Valley, where a heavy boom caught the rafts. Rafting came to an abrupt end in August, 1826, when the Union Canal began using the creek water for its big dam at Inwood.

Swatara's timber also went into the local charcoal iron forges and furnaces. The abundance of hardwood timber below the Sharp Mountain Gap at High Bridge determined the site of the famous Swatara Furnace. Thousands of cords of charcoal were consumed by this furnace before anthracite outcroppings were stripped in the wilderness about a mile away. Once famous Swatara stoves were cast and finished here when the furnace was converted to a foundry.

In 1830 Daniel Rondebach built a forge, the only one in the West End at the time, which manufactured hardware and farm tools. Located on the Lower Swatara, it derived its power from a large overshot waterwheel. The property changed hands several times. Through the years a furnace and three blocks of stone workers' houses were added. The Stanhope furnace received its iron ore from the Lebanon Valley, and most of its pig iron was used for casting iron work for mine and railway cars in Tremont and Pine Grove foundries. When Breidenbaugh and Sheets acquired the property, they enlarged the furnace and discarded the old forge. The furnace continued in blast until 1875.³²

A covered bridge spanning the Lower Swatara long stood as a landmark because of its proximity to the Stanhope furnace. Other covered bridges spanned the Swatara and its many tributaries. Virtually every one had been built prior to the Civil War.

LOCATING COAL BY "SIGHT AND SMELL"

In 1743 Conrad Weiser, great peacemaker of colonial times, was entrusted with a delicate mission to the chiefs of the Six Nations at Onondaga, New York—namely, to try to settle an old land dispute between them and the Governor of Virginia.³³

Taking advantage of this opportunity, the British authorities assigned two specialists, John Bartram, Quaker botanist, and Lewis Evans, surveyor and map-maker, to accompany Weiser for the purpose of exploring and mapping this northern wilderness coveted, it was believed, by the French in Canada.

After a night's stay in Weiser's home at Tulpehocken (Womelsdorf), the three men set out on their long journey on the fifth of July. The first two days carried them through the Swatara country. Both Bartram and Evans took copious notes of their observations, making their journals a rich source of documentation of the region as it appeared in pre-Revolutionary days.³⁴

Being the colonies' greatest botanist, Bartram naturally concentrated on the flora. That he did not ignore nor overlook other phenomena is indicated by the following entry in his journal for July 6, 1743:

... We traveled 7 miles over several hollows, swamps and small ridges, full of scrubby bushes, and still poor and stoney to the last great ridge, which is composed chiefly of large gravel, as big as pigeons or pullets eggs, and even the rocks seemed but heaps of the same materials ...³⁵

If Bartram had known as much about geology as he did about botany, he might have identified the "large gravel" as Pottsville conglomerate, the rock that underlies all the Pennsylvania anthracite seams—the same rock out of which Philip Ginder made millstones for himself and other mill operators, a search for which led him to the discovery of anthracite at Summit Hill.

A knowledge of the character of this rock would have stimulated his curiosity to explore the surrounding land under the "scrubby bushes" for anthracite outcroppings. Coal must have been there, for he had stumbled upon what was later known as "Good Spring." There were rich deposits of anthracite here—enough, anyway, to support a large colliery on this site for many years.

While he barely missed being the first man on record to discover anthracite, Bartram, nevertheless, must hereafter be regarded as the first white man known to have seen surface evidence of the presence of anthracite, and the date, July 6, 1743, becomes an important one in the history of the anthracite industry.³⁶

Folklore played an important role in locating coal seams before prospecting became scientific. An ancient miner's method for finding coal and other minerals underground is the *virgula divina* or divining rod. Americans know it as the forked twig used in "water witching," "water

dowsing," or as the Pennsylvania Dutch know it, "water smelling."³⁷ Among Schuylkill County coal miners, this folk tradition when applied to probing for virgin anthracite (without the use of the forked twig) is known as divining by "sight and smell," or by "horse-mining sense."

As early as 1556, Georgius Agricola in his immortal work, *De re metallica*, had this to say after serving as a mining camp doctor in Bohemia: "There are many great contentions between miners concerning the forked twig, for some say that it is of the greatest use in discovering veins, and others deny it."³⁸

Regarding this folk tradition in Schuylkill County, the Pottsville *Republican* of April 4, 1914, published a feature story of which the following is an excerpt:

Did you ever hear of finding coal veins lying tens, and hundreds, and thousands of feet below the earth's surface by "sight and smell"?

That is what an old-time miner told us was the way they often could tell where the coal deposits were. It was a queer assertion to make and most of the people who read this article will, like us, smile, and some would-be present great experts will ridicule it, but nevertheless, many miners assert that there is an indefinable something, they can't tell what, whether it is a haze or an odor, or a peculiar condition of vegetation, or unusual appearance on the ground. No one can tell what it is, but there also are miners who even assert that besides finding coal by sight or smell, that when the ground is covered with snow, and only a few trees to judge from, along with the conditions of the atmosphere, and the nearby hills, that they can often say whether or not there is a possibility of finding coal beneath the surface thereabouts. Old miners declare it with such positive conviction and back it up with declarations and examples of coal veins found by miners in this manner.

There are people who laugh and make fun of the old-time system of finding water with a little hazel twig resting lightly between the fingers, and which is supposed to bend down when there is a body of water beneath the surface where you stand, but some of the greatest finds of water have been made in this way, in unexpected localities on top of hills.

For instance, where is the man who would have wagered five cents on finding large quantities of water on top of Broad Mountain near Frackville? Yet a little old-fashioned man with a hazel twig insisted that there were unlimited quantities of water in the mountain beneath the Frackville district.

The theoretical and college-educated water experts go hunting up the geologists, who thought there might be a possibility of finding water, but that the drill would have to go very deep. The result of the prospecting for water there has produced an inexhaustible artesian well supply that is the wonder of the whole

Pottsville coal region, and the little old man with his hazel twig started it.

Coal prospectors, however, relied more on the "sight and smell" method than on the forked twig.

A parallel tradition was discovered among the Cornish metal miners in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan by Professor Richard M. Dorson. "Wherever you see a little light jumping around one spot—an open place, or near furze bushes—there's rich mineral near," he was told. "They claim that's what makes those lights—Jack O'Lanterns they're called—dance around. If you sink a shaft there you'll find ore."³⁹

A comprehensive study of the folklore of water witching, a recently-completed Harvard University project, gives credit to German miners for inventing the divining rod for finding rich mineral deposits. This was in the sixteenth century, about a century prior to its application to divining underground water.⁴⁰

How then did this old folk tradition enter Schuylkill County? It may have come directly from Germany, the place of its origin, in the eighteenth century as part of the rich folklore carried over by the pre-Revolutionary War German settlers. On the other hand, it might have been introduced by Cornish miners. The parallel in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan suggests this possibility. The Cornish learned it from a group of German miners who had gone to work in the mining industry of Cornwall during the reign of Queen Elizabeth (1558–1603).⁴¹

In the West End of Schuylkill County, anthracite outcroppings were common. These exposed seams were easy to mine. The alluvial covering that had sheltered it through the ages was removed and the coal was quarried like stone. When the seam was concealed, the Swatara pioneer learned to recognize certain surface conditions for clues. Black smut was one of the signs. Exploring ravines or riverbeds, the pioneer prospector looked for small black pebbles. Abraham Pott, a son of Pottsville's founder, told how in his younger days when coal land was increasing in value he would follow a stream from mouth to source picking up black pebbles along the way. When the waterworn fragments disappeared, he knew that the outcrop was not too far away. And where a stream deposited a light, yellowish coating along its banks and over stones, the water was believed to contain iron originating in a seam of coal.

The first actual discovery of coal in the Swatara country, according to geologist Taylor, occurred at the western end of Sharp Mountain,

a mile and a half east of the Susquehanna. The discoverer, John Musser, applied for a warrant of survey on February 24, 1768. Musser obtained a warrant for a tract of twenty-five acres of land, which was subsequently patented under the title of "Musser's Treasure."⁴²

Taylor learned about early mining activity in this remote corner from interviews with pioneers. "Abundant traces are visible here," he wrote, "in the numerous excavations of the labors of the early explorers in search of solid coal. About the year 1802, it is stated, that two boat loads of the coal obtained from about a mile east of the point, were sent down the river [Susquehanna] to Harrisburg and to Baltimore."⁴³

While there were many mine openings along the Swatara north of Lorberry Junction early in the nineteenth century, the first colliery of any importance was started at Lorberry by James Oliver and Reuben Stees about 1835. It began with fifty employees, made up of native residents; that is, Pennsylvania Dutchmen, and some immigrant Germans and Irishmen who had been part of the Union Canal's construction crew. The colliery prospered for several years; for a while 250 persons lived in the Lorberry mine patch. There were two other pioneer collieries on Lorberry Creek in 1839, as reported by the Strong Committee to the Legislature; one was operated by Holmes, Ley and Company, and the other, by Strong and Krause.⁴⁴

These primitive coal mines were in Tremont Township where anthracite mining began early. It was not until the middle of the century, however, that real mining history started. The firm of Miller and Kitzmiller was among the leading coal operators of the period. In 1851 it drove a tunnel about fifty yards west of the large arch at Lorberry. Four years later it sank a slope near the mouth of the tunnel, and in 1857 it opened a new colliery, Rausch Creek. All three mining operations worked the Mammoth, the anthracite region's thickest coal seam, ranging from sixty to one hundred feet.

Miller and Kitzmiller were lucky in that the Mammoth seam, often found much deeper in the ground, ran close to the surface on their property, making it comparatively less expensive to mine it. In view of its great thickness, the Mammoth was worked quite differently from all other anthracite seams. Two men were assigned to a "breast." Each miner drove a manway up for about thirty feet, then a heading was cut across the breast from one manway to the other. The pillar of coal left between the two manways was not blasted down with powder or dynamite as in the case of all other coal seams. In-

stead, each miner, using a "pricker," a long iron rod made for the purpose, poked vigorously at the pillar of coal until he had loosened it in the breast up to the heading. That started it running into the chute. Often such an avalanche required hundreds of cars and many weeks of labor to load.

With so much near-surface coal dislodged, it was inevitable that "mine breaches," or craters, should be found in Tremont Township. One could follow the progress of Mammoth seam operations there by the number and direction of the craters. One in particular was famous as an "ice cave." Water dropping from the surface formed ice on the bottom, and this became a source of ice for the people of the township in summer. People walked many miles with bags to bring it home. On Sunday afternoons young people made ice cream on the spot. This mine breach remained as a tourist attraction and as a natural source of ice for many decades. It was finally filled by slush from Lincoln Colliery in the 1890's.

The coal breaker at the Miller and Kitzmiller tunnel mine was run by waterpower, which was rare. Prepared coal was shipped from the breaker in small, open, four-wheeled cars commonly known as "lager-beer" cars. They were run down a plane near Lorberry Creek to the foot of the hill, then by gravity to Lorberry Junction. Here they were picked up by mule teams. Drawn to Pine Grove, they were dumped into canalboats for shipment to Philadelphia and other markets. The empties went back to the breaker by mulepower.

The lager-beer cars had another function. Once a month, on payday (it was usually on a Saturday), miners and their wives were taken for a ride into Pine Grove to buy their month's provisions from the company store, where it was compulsory for employees to shop. When they had completed their purchases, including all the lager beer they could drink and pay for in saloons, they were transported back to their homes in the same luxurious manner, though not always in the same condition. At this period there were no stores, company-owned or otherwise, at Lorberry.⁴⁵

THE GRATZ FAMILY IN LYKENS VALLEY

Lykens Valley was the home of red ash coal, famous in the anthracite trade. Odorless and smokeless, more easily kindled and freer burning than white ash coal, it was long Baltimore's favorite.

The valley (and the town and township) was named for Andrew Lycans, an intrepid first settler who died of wounds in a running battle with attacking Indians, two of whom he killed on his farm on March 7, 1756. In the naming of the valley in his honor, "Lycans" somehow was misspelled as "Lykens"; but no mistake in orthography can deprive Andrew Lycans of his share of glory as a courageous and martyred pioneer.⁴⁶

Another pioneer is honored in loving memory—Simon Gratz, founder of the town of Gratz on Wild Cat Ridge, who laid the foundation for the Lykens Valley's once prosperous anthracite industry.

The story of Simon Gratz and other members of the celebrated Gratz family of Proper Philadelphians in the Lykens Valley coal-fields is an integral and colorful part of the annals of the Pennsylvania Dutch penetration of the anthracite region. Like other Pennsylvania Dutch, the Gratzes are descendants of eighteenth-century immigrants from Germany; but unlike the others, the family's early generations in Philadelphia observed the Jewish religion. The Gratzes had a substantial investment of brains and money in the pioneer anthracite industry in Lykens Valley as elsewhere in the hard-coal fields, and in the pioneer canals and railroads that transported the product. Hundreds of Pennsylvania Dutch mining families owed their livelihood to this combination of Gratz brains and money. How revered is the memory of Simon Gratz in the Lykens Valley after the passage of 150 years was demonstrated in 1955 when the town of Gratz celebrated the sesquicentennial of its founding by the Philadelphia financier and philanthropist.

The Gratz family's original hometown was Langendorf, Upper Silesia. Barnard Gratz was the first to immigrate to the colonies, arriving in Philadelphia in 1756; his brother, Michael, followed him three years later. Both had stopped a brief period to clerk for their cousin, Solomon Henry, in London.

Trading as B. and M. Gratz, Barnard and Michael became prominent merchants, engaged in the coastal trade all the way from New Orleans to Quebec. They were among the Philadelphia merchants who signed the Non-Importation Agreement ending trade with Britain as a protest against imposition of the Stamp Act. As staunch American patriots, they helped secure needed supplies for the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War, which won them the friendship of many military leaders. During the British occupation of Philadelphia, B. and M. Gratz moved their headquarters to Lancaster,

home of Joseph Simon, Michael Gratz's father-in-law, who was widely known as a frontier trader. The brothers engaged in the western frontier trade, in the furtherance of which they operated a fleet of steamboats down the Ohio River.

Michael was the more adventurous of the two brothers. With some help from his father-in-law, he accumulated vast tracts of land. He owned ten thousand acres in that part of Virginia that went into the new state of Kentucky in 1792. His extensive New York property was in the Mohawk Valley, where he founded Gratzburg, and he may have sold a portion of it to James Fenimore Cooper's father for his settlement, Cooperstown. The Pennsylvania holdings consisted of many tracts scattered over the central and western parts of the state, which Michael had obtained by purchase or as collateral on notes taken in business transactions.⁴⁷

The firm of B. and M. Gratz was dissolved in 1787. Both brothers died in 1811, Barnard in Baltimore and Michael in Philadelphia.

One of Michael's twelve children was Rebecca Gratz (1781-1869) about whom there is a generally accepted tradition that she was the original of the famous character, Rebecca, in Sir Walter Scott's novel, *Ivanhoe*. It was from Washington Irving that Scott had heard about Rebecca Gratz, her beauty and charm, her pioneer social work in Philadelphia, and her steadfast loyalty to her religion for which she sacrificed an opportunity for a happy marriage.⁴⁸

Of Michael's sons, Simon Gratz was best endowed by nature with those qualities that made for a successful business career. From his father, and from his grandfather, Joseph Simon, then Lancaster's leading merchant, the young man learned everything worth knowing about business administration. By the time he had completed his training, Simon Gratz was ready to assume his share of the family responsibilities. With his brother, Hyman,⁴⁹ he formed the firm of S. and H. Gratz in Philadelphia to carry on the tradition of the former firm as commission merchants and real-estate brokers.

In 1798, S. and H. Gratz purchased a red-brick building at the southwest corner of Seventh and Market Streets from the estate of Jacob Hiltzheimer, and moved their wholesale grocery business into it. This was a historic house. In 1776, when it was the residence of a young couple, Mr. and Mrs. J. Graff, Thomas Jefferson occupied the entire second floor as his lodgings, and in the front room he wrote the Declaration of Independence.⁵⁰

Being progressive, the Gratzes constantly improved upon the busi-

ness methods of their father and uncle to keep abreast of the practices of the new century and to meet the needs of a growing America. As merchants and brokers they were deeply involved in the movement of manufactured goods to the new western states and of raw materials and farm products to the East. Eventually they got into the shipping trade with the Orient, their sailing vessels, bulging with exotic cargoes from far-distant places, competing for space at the Philadelphia wharves.

In the passing years it was plain that Simon Gratz was the senior partner. Merchant prince, shipping magnate, banker and philanthropist, he occupied a high position in the community. He was one of the founders of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, and a lifelong patron; and he belonged to other cultural and social bodies open to Proper Philadelphians.

Simon Gratz's career somewhat paralleled that of his famous contemporary, Stephen Girard. Like Girard he had his own private bank, the Schuylkill Bank. He was one of the directors of the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal Company, which Girard had promoted. He was also on the board of the Philadelphia and Pittsburgh Transporting Company that owned a toll road running to and through some of the Gratz lands, and he was part owner of two other turnpike companies.

His keenest business interest, however, was reserved for the extensive and tangled holdings of virgin lands scattered in many states, which he owned by inheritance or purchase. In addition to the considerable real estate left him by his father, Simon Gratz had had the good fortune of being made sole heir, with full power of attorney, by Aaron Levy and his wife, Rachel, who were childless. At the time of his will, June 28, 1802, Aaron Levy was probably the biggest landowner in Pennsylvania with holdings in almost every county in the state. He was the founder of Centre County's Aaronsburg, named for him, which he had laid out in 1786 in the hope that its central location would help make it the state capital. Levy regarded Simon Gratz as a son, but this was not the only reason for conveying to him all his immense real-estate holdings. He did it in return for an annuity. When the land boom collapsed in the closing years of the eighteenth century, Levy was an old man with much land and little cash. Under these circumstances, an annuity seemed downright desirable, if not necessary.⁵¹ So to the vast Gratz family lands, the young

financier, Simon Gratz, added the extensive Aaron Levy properties.

Among the Levy tracts that Simon Gratz took over was Wild Cat Ridge in the Lykens Valley. Impressed with the future possibilities of this wilderness, Simon laid out the town of Gratz. This occurred in 1805, marking the beginning of the Gratz family saga in the Swatara country.

It is hard to say whether Simon Gratz had coal on his mind in 1805, but there is no doubt that he had after 1825, the year anthracite was discovered on the summit of Short Mountain by two friends, Jacob Burd, Jr., and Peter Kimes. When he heard of the discovery, Simon lost no time buying up hundreds of acres of coal-bearing lands, shrewdly selecting for his investment the land on both sides of Bear Gap, north of Wiconisco, where he estimated (or was advised) that coal could be mined at comparatively small cost above water level by means of drifts.⁵²

In 1831 Simon Gratz organized the Wiconisco Coal Company, the first of its kind in Lykens Valley, of which he was president and principal owner. Five associates shared the ownership: Samuel Richards, George H. Thompson, and Charles Rockland Thompson, all of Philadelphia; and Henry Schreiner and Henry Sheaffer, both of Dauphin County. After the passage of an enabling act in 1830, the same associates organized The Lykens Valley Railroad and Coal Company, and began opening their mines by drifts in the gap at Bear Creek, a tributary of Wiconisco Creek. The railroad, first in Dauphin County to transport anthracite, was completed in 1834. From the mines at Bear Gap it ran sixteen miles to its terminus at Millersburg on the Susquehanna River, the coal being pulled by mulepower on wooden rails. The river crossing was made in boats to Mount Patrick on the opposite side of the river in Perry County where the company had a set of chutes on the Pennsylvania Canal. The first boatload of Lykens Valley coal was shipped on Saturday, April 19, 1834. The boat was called the 76; it had a forty-three-ton capacity; and the captain was C. Faunce. The cargo was consigned to Thomas Barbridge in Columbia, farther down the river.⁵³

Simon Gratz did not live long enough to see his little railroad modernized and strengthened with iron T-rails to support the heavier cars carrying more anthracite per trip from expanding mines, the railroad improvements having been completed in 1848. Gratz had died on July 14, 1839. A sixteen-ton locomotive engine named "Lykens

Valley" displaced mulepower. Ten years after his death, the company bought its second locomotive, weighing twenty-five tons, which the directors named "Simon Gratz" in his memory.

Nor did Simon Gratz live long enough to see and fully enjoy the flowering of his efforts in the anthracite industry. For a century after he had opened his Bear Gap drift mines, millions of tons of anthracite went out to distant markets—to light homes, offices, public buildings, and factories; and to warm countless people with the product's cheerful glow. In return flowed the gold that built towns like Lykens, Wiconisco, Williamstown, Gratz, Millersburg, and Elizabethville—all in the Lykens Valley; that paid for the construction of canals and railroads; that built schools and white-painted church buildings with their steeples reaching for the stars. When Simon Gratz began his work in 1805, the whole Upper End of Dauphin County was one vast wilderness of mountains, forests, and rushing streams, and only a few scattered log cabins giving signs of human habitation. There was no sound to disturb the primeval stillness, except that of roaring creeks and the strange noises of wild animals on the prowl. Anthracite was the magic that transformed a wilderness into a civilized place, but it took men of vision, initiative, and courage like Simon Gratz, and coal miners who risked their lives, to accomplish it.

Simon Gratz attended religious services in the Mikveh Israel Synagogue, Philadelphia's first, which his father and Uncle Barnard had helped found in 1782. He himself served as treasurer about 1820 and as a trustee in 1828.

About the same time he was helping the people of Gratz to realize their dream of a union church. He built the first place of worship, a log building, for Simeon's Lutheran and Reformed Church in 1819. Later, when the congregation was ready for a larger church, he donated an acre of ground on Center Street as its site. When the new church was dedicated in 1832, he gave the congregation its first pulpit Bible.⁵⁴

To look after his financial interests and to keep warm his local friendships, Gratz frequently left the comfort of his country seat, "Willington," along Broad Street north of Ridge Road, Philadelphia, to visit the Lykens Valley.

Nor was he the only Gratz to associate himself with the valley and the Swatara country. His brother, Jacob Gratz (1790–1856), par-

ticipated in the management of the Union Canal from its beginning, and in 1834 he was elected president of the company.⁵⁵

Two of Simon Gratz's four sons—Theodore and Edward—cast their lot with the people of Lykens Valley. After the death of his father, Theodore Gratz abandoned fashionable society in Philadelphia to live in Gratz. For years his substantial brick house at Market and Pine Streets was one of the town's showplaces. He kept busy managing the Gratz property and coal mining interests that he had inherited from his father. He was admired and respected by his neighbors who elected him to the State Assembly for the 1846–1847 term; and when Gratz was incorporated on April 3, 1852, they elected him as their first Chief Burgess. He was only fifty-two when he died in Gratz in 1863.

With coal mining interests on the other side of Short Mountain, Edward, his brother, chose to make his home in the town of Lykens, which he had laid out in 1848. This town site was part of a tract of 180 acres which his father had bought at a sheriff's sale in 1835. Edward Gratz passed away in 1869.

Edward's son, David Gratz, also lived in Lykens where he managed the family estate. He was married to Katherine Martz. Two of their sons, Jacob and Edward, both in their seventies, were still living in Lykens in the summer of 1959, and their sister, Virginia Gratz Hackman, was alive in Takoma Park, Maryland. Neither Jacob nor Edward have children to carry on the Gratz name in the Lykens Valley. At their death the Gratz family saga in the valley, spanning more than 150 years, will of necessity come to an end.⁵⁶



MONOPOLY TAKES OVER

OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE ANTHRACITE INDUSTRY IN THE SWATARA country dates from November 22, 1830, when the *Beauty Mary* glided into her berth at the head of navigation on the Union Canal in Pine Grove. With Captain Heckaman at the tiller, and many important citizens aboard, the canalboat received a royal welcome.

The whole town had turned out for this joyous event. Its significance lay in the fact that for the first time the Swatara mining industry would be able to compete on equal terms for its rightful share of the anthracite trade. Everything else had waited for the opening of this new artificial waterway to Philadelphia.¹

The Union Canal Railroad, chartered in 1826, ran north along what was later known as the Lebanon and Tremont Branch of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad, to the junction of the Lorberry and Swatara Creeks. It connected with mines in the vicinity of Molleystown, and with those that had been opened along the upper reaches of those creeks.

The first horse-drawn trainload of coal was made the occasion of a holiday by happy miners who followed it on foot into Pine Grove cheering every inch of the way.

Word of the opening of a new coal region spread fast even for those days, and before long the Swatara country was overrun by fortune-seeking speculators. They bid up the mountain land to fantastic heights. In the Lorberry section, and along the Second

Mountain, land valued at one dollar an acre brought one hundred dollars, and even five hundred, an acre. Some tracts north of Lorberrry were sold at the rate of one thousand dollars an acre. Mountain slopes over a wide area were scarred with pits and trial shafts sunk by prospectors who, lacking technical training or mining experience, succeeded only in discovering the depths of their own folly.²

The steady growth of the Swatara country's anthracite industry was accompanied by the development of a network of independent lateral railroads to haul the coal tonnage from mine to canal. Sometimes a new railroad was thrust into the wilderness for the opening of new collieries; sometimes collieries using horse teams operated before the building of a railroad.

The Swatara Railroad, chartered in 1831, provided transportation beyond the northern terminal of the Union Canal Railroad into "the heart of the coal region."

The Dauphin and Susquehanna Railroad was completed after the discovery of coal in the Second Mountain in 1846. Its cars picked up coal at Yellow Springs, Rausch Gap, and Gold Mine, and hauled it to Dauphin in Dauphin County where it was loaded on boats of the Pennsylvania Canal. After 1854 this line was merged with the Fishing Creek, Swatara and Schuylkill Railroad which, for the first time, gave the Swatara country through rail service from the Susquehanna River to the Schuylkill.

The merger failed, however. A reorganization created the Schuylkill and Susquehanna Railroad which for many years dominated the field. Penetrating the wilderness between Dauphin and Pine Grove, it accelerated its development into one of the most active mining areas, with Rausch Gap as its center, in the Swatara country.

Meanwhile, the Union Canal and its railroad were enlarged and made more efficient with new equipment to meet the ever-increasing demands made upon them by more coal production. By the 1850's, however, the people doubted that the canal could long stand the competition from the Iron Horse. Its greatest weakness was its limited service. Navigation was stopped with the coming of winter, and that resulted in a shutdown of the collieries. Three or four months of production were thus lost by the industry and the mine-workers. This problem was solved by the Schuylkill and Susquehanna Railroad introducing year-round transportation service between mines and markets. This is why the opening of the line was greeted with much joy.

When, in 1861, the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad leased the Schuylkill and Susquehanna, it was regarded as a bad omen for the Union Canal. This deal gave the Reading entrance into the West End coalfields with virtual control of railway transportation into Philadelphia. The Reading's invasion aroused great outcries of anguish from all the people whose living depended on the canal, especially the canalboatmen.³

When the 1862 spring season opened, the canal and the Reading jockeyed for position. Their competition had become intensified. To embarrass each other, both cut their freight tolls to levels too low for profit. Surprisingly the contest seemed to favor the boatmen, but then Providence, in the form of a devastating flood, intervened.

The Swatara Creek had had a history of disastrous floods reaching back to the era of the original German settlers, and probably much further in unrecorded history. In its thirty-two years of existence, the Union Canal had been damaged several times in this way. The first serious flood had come in 1839 and the most destructive in 1850, when canal navigation was forced to a halt for an entire month.

The knockout blow, however, did not come until early in June, 1862. It started with torrential rains during the night of the third of June. The downpour continued for some thirty consecutive hours causing the already swollen Swatara to rise even more menacingly. The mountain stream rushed by as a surging, seething mass of water carrying along on its crest driftwood and a variety of debris washed down from the mountains. Many hardy souls lined the Union Canal railroad tracks east of the canal basin in Pine Grove to watch the boatmen bringing their boats across the basin to moor them at the coal landings.

"Will the big dam hold in the storm?" was the fearful thought on everybody's mind.

The answer came the next morning, the fifth, in the form of an ominous rumble from the direction of Inwood Gap. The breast of the dam had cracked under pressure, releasing a wall of water which caused an immediate rise of several feet in the flood stage. When the main body reached the basin, it became apparent that nothing could control the relentless drive of the flood. It swept everything in its path, pushing bridges and buildings from their foundations, tearing canalboats from their moorings, and destroying homes in the lower section of Pine Grove.⁴

Not until the rains had stopped and the Swatara had returned to

its banks did the people realize the true extent of the devastation. Gone was the big dam; gone, too, was the canal itself. This was long before the days of widespread property insurance coverage, and long before the days when the American Red Cross would intervene after a flood to make outright grants to needy flood victims. The victims of 1862 were left entirely to their own resources.

Destruction of the Union Canal was followed by the purchase of its right of way by the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad. With the deal went possession of the canal's railroad. The Reading's control of the Swatara railroad system now was complete. The coal operators of the area were far from jubilant over this development. More than ever, they were now at the mercy of an overpowering monopoly.

In the middle of the nineteenth century, the Swatara anthracite industry was largely a Pennsylvania Dutch enterprise. Most of the coal operators and most of the mineworkers were of Pennsylvania German ancestry. The operators were characteristically individualistic, using every means at their command—political and economic—to prevent any mining corporations from getting a foothold in their own bailiwick. That was before the wily Mr. Gowen forced his way in.

These individualistic operators not only competed with one another, but also with those shipping on the Schuylkill and Lehigh Canals, and even with the operators in the Wyoming Valley who had certain advantages over the shippers of the lower anthracite field.

Demand and prices fluctuated from one season to another, making advance planning a financial gamble which few operators could afford to undertake. Coal prices were subject to many conditions beyond an operator's control, such as transportation tolls, changes in the weather, and general business trends.

For example, during the winter of 1854-55, many of the West End Coal operators, in expectation of ample profits to be earned in the coming season, had borrowed heavily from banks to modernize their collieries. But to their dismay the season developed contrary to predictions, and many collieries were idle most of the year. Those who could not pay their bank notes were squeezed out of the business. It was especially hard on the little fellows. It was a time of financial panics in the country. Few segments of the national economy escaped unhurt.

The bigger operators finally concluded that they would have to buy out their weaker brethren, consolidate their small workings into

larger and more efficient collieries, build coal breakers, and install new pumps and other machinery to retain control of the Swatara mining industry. Among the substantial Pennsylvania Dutch operators were: Charles Molley; Reuben H. Stees; Dr. John Kitzmiller; James Oliver; Phillips & Sheaffer; Stees & Shirk; Levi Miller & Company; Henry Heil; William Graeff and his Lutheran minister son, Rev. John E. Graeff.⁵

This vast expansion necessarily had to be financed with money borrowed from the banks. In the midst of the program the operators felt the impact of the 1857 panic that had paralyzed business all over the country. The banks called in their loans, which some of the operators could not pay.

This created the greatest financial crisis in the entire history of the Swatara anthracite industry. Even more paralyzing than individual ruin was the real threat of losing everything to an outside corporate monopoly. *The bank loans had to be paid!* It went beyond mere business. The honor of the Pennsylvania Dutch people was involved. The worried operators selected a committee, of which Dr. John Kitzmiller was chairman, to solicit financial assistance from their brethren in other lines, such as merchants, hotelkeepers, boat builders, and manufacturers. It took valiant efforts to raise the amount needed, but enough was collected to pay off the bank loans, and everybody in the *Freindschaft* (clan) breathed easily. The anthracite mines would remain in local, Pennsylvania Dutch hands.

That is what *they* thought! Little did they realize that the day of doom had merely been postponed.

In 1868 the East Brookside Colliery was opened by Daniel Althouse, Abraham Evans, Abraham Mathis, and Robert Savage; and the West Brookside Colliery, by Benjamin Kaufman and James and Edward Savage. They were large and efficient collieries having a railroad extension from Tremont.⁶ Then in 1869 Levi Miller & Company opened the Lincoln Colliery in Tremont Township, and Phillips & Sheaffer began operating their new Kalmia Colliery.⁷

The Lincoln, and all other individually-owned collieries in the Swatara country, were destined to become pawns in the great game of monopoly under Franklin B. Gowen, president of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad. By 1870 the Reading controlled all railway transportation in Schuylkill County. Not a bucket of coal could be moved except over the Reading lines, and at tolls set by Gowen from year to year. He acted like a little tin god. What he gave he

could take away. Simply by denying coal cars he could put an individual operator, or any group of operators, out of business for a month, a year, or forever. He was also accused of using this device on Philadelphia retail coal dealers. He held a taut rein on transportation, but he wanted more to make his monopoly complete, to establish absolute control over production.

"The best way of accomplishing this result," he told his stockholders in 1872, "was for the Company to become the owners of coal lands situate upon the line of its several branches."⁸

We have already seen how he accumulated seventy thousand acres of coal lands in 1871. By adding ten thousand acres a year to the Company's holdings, he was able to bring the total holdings up to one hundred thousand acres by 1874. The additional collieries, bringing the total to thirty-seven, were purchased for direct operation, while sixteen others were bought just for scrapping.⁹

The Company proceeded to buy up the best coal property in Schuylkill and Northumberland Counties, including all the Mahanoy lands from Mahanoy City to Trevorton, except the Girard coal lands, which were not for sale. Among the coal lands acquired in the Swatara country were those of the Tremont Coal Company.

While the Company was chiefly interested in large tracts, its land agents did not pass up small properties. Most landowners and independent operators were caught in a squeeze and had to sell at the best price they could get. On the other hand, there were those who sought to retain their property, but had no choice, if Gowen and his land agents coveted it.

Schuylkill County anecdotes tell of the chicanery of land agents, not only Gowen's, but some representing other railroad-mining corporations. One of the stories involves a family of good reputation and long residence in Reilly Township. Refusing a final offer, the family was besieged by a mob of white and Negro hoodlums hired by the Company. First, a barrage of rocks was hurled through windows. Then the house was set afire, and it burned to the ground. With only the sky for a cover, the determined family held on to its patch of land by taking refuge in a makeshift shelter. Only winter finally forced them off the land. The anecdote is not clear as to whether there was ever a settlement over the property. Anyway, the Company built a "possession house" on the tract, moved another family into it, paying them so much a month to live in it until title to the property had been cleared.

Apparently there were many possession houses in Schuylkill County. One former miner told me that he was reared in one at Keffers in Porter Township. A retired high official of the Company explained that possession houses were put up "when there was a dispute as to the legality of ownership," adding that these houses were generally occupied by company police twenty-four hours a day on shifts.

One by one Swatara's individually-owned collieries came under control of the Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company. Ultimately, not a single one was left in independent hands, not even the greatest colliery of them, the pride of Pennsylvania Dutchdom—the Lincoln.

IMPACT ON THE MINERS

While monopoly fastened its tentacles on the West End coalfield, what was the impact on the miners? The company store, source of many evils, disappeared from Reading mine patches. This pleased the miners. Otherwise, however, company discipline, often imposed by coal and iron police, was not relaxed. This made the miners less than happy.

Pennsylvania Dutch miners remained a majority in the West End. Now and then they were joined by groups of German immigrants, some with old-country mining experience, who mingled freely, intermarried, and were absorbed by the majority. Here in the West End all those of Germanic stock—immigrants and descendants of eighteenth-century settlers—were classed as "Pennsylvania Dutch." Elsewhere in the anthracite region Pennsylvania Dutch miners were grouped under the generic term, Germans.

The Company recognized the Pennsylvania Dutch as competent craftsmen, an opinion held to the very end of the industry in 1930. "You can't get any better miners than those of the Pennsylvania Dutch," observed L. D. Lamont of Pottsville, former divisional superintendent of the Company's West End collieries.

"They are just as proficient in mining as they are in farming," Lamont said. "And the experience I have had with them is that they are exceptionally capable of doing any task that you ask them to do. They are reliable. They are an honest people, conscientious,

and truthful, and as employers we were very glad to have them in our employ."¹⁰

To accelerate production, the Company modernized its collieries. While increasing efficiency, these technological improvements did not benefit the miners. The average mineworker's task was not made correspondingly easier nor less hazardous. Mining continued to be the country's most dangerous occupation.

Mining was more strenuous and dangerous in the Southern Anthracite Field, of which the West End was a part, than elsewhere, because of the sharply pitching seams the miner encountered. The basic method was to drive chutes up into the seam until the coal was exhausted. Coal deposits were penetrated by frequent blasting. As he worked himself farther up the pitch in the seam, the miner had to keep timbering to provide protection from possible cave-ins. Besides taking up much of his time, this extensive timbering was extremely hazardous and exhausting manual labor. It meant carrying heavy mine timbers from the gangways up the pitch to the top of the chute. And the Pennsylvania Dutch physique, inured to hardships and conditioned to heavy labor by work on the farm, proved equal to the challenge.

The perils of working on the pitch are vividly described by Joseph F. Patterson, a practical miner from England, who immigrated to the West End of Schuylkill County in April, 1869. His description applies, though not exclusively, to Pennsylvania Dutch miners with whom he had worked on the pitch. These are Patterson's recollections:

The miners of the anthracite . . . region of Pennsylvania are skilled beyond those of any other coal region in the world. Let the miner come from what part of the world he may to this region, he discovers that his previous knowledge, acquired in other localities, avails him but little. He is obliged to start in and learn the why's and wherefore's of mining coal over again.

In the first place, the hard coal of Pennsylvania is altogether different in its nature from that found in other regions. Sometimes a miner with a pick can make practically no impression on the coal, it is so hard; it takes powder to move it from its original bed. Consequently, he uses no pick, but relies on his drill and powder entirely.

Again, the coal in some of these veins, when first loosened from its original bed, has sharp projections so fine that they will cut like a razor, and the miner does not discover that he is cut until the blood coming from the wound makes the tool that he is

handling slippery. In carelessly lifting a chunk of freshly mined anthracite the miner's hand is sometimes cut to the bone by the fine razor edge on it.

Again, the pitching veins, set at an angle of, say, from twenty to eighty degrees from the horizontal, alter the conditions of working immensely. The breast miner is up a tree, so to speak, all the time. He has to perform skilled labor standing on a piece of timber a couple of inches wide, sometimes on his toes, sometimes on his heels, sometimes down on his knees, or lying on his side or back. He climbs up a breast with the agility of a four-footed animal, and after lighting a blast he comes down the manway at a gait that not many four-footed animals could be trained to equal.

Indeed, when a miner was closed in by a fall of coal and the manway blocked quite a distance up, I knew a miner, one of the band of rescuers, to voluntarily go up, start the coal, that is, loosen it over his head, let it drop down the sixty degrees pitch, and he depended for his safety upon his ability to travel ahead of it. He practically did keep ahead, but when it came to making a dead stop in his rapid descent of the manway and then proceeding at right angles into the heading, the pieces of coal following him were too quick and they cut and bruised him severely before his alert comrades could seize and drag him under cover.¹¹

Long before machine mining came into widespread use, the Pennsylvania Dutch miner had to master a set of tools with which he worked in his daily task "at the face." First of all, there was the pick, symbol of his craft, for undercutting the seam to prepare it for blasting. You could tell a native miner from a British immigrant by the way each handled a pick. Accustomed to working in big coal—that is, in thick seams—the Pennsylvania Dutch miner swung his pick freely over his shoulder. The British immigrant miner, on the other hand (and his father and grandfather before him) had worked in thin seams and narrow places. Consequently, he was in the habit of holding the pick in front of him and striking the coal in short, quick strokes.¹² Both native and foreign miners liked to listen to the ring of the pick's blows on the hard coal—blows often marked by great precision. The pick, edged at one end and kept at needlepoint sharpness at the other, gave the pioneer miner a sense of responsibility and independence, and a good measure of security.

Sometimes the coal was too hard for much pickwork and the miner relied mostly on blasting. He used a short hand drill, edged at one end and with a head at the other. His drilling done, he removed the boremeal from the hole with a "scraper," a small iron rod with a hook at one end. A "cartridge" was made by wrapping heavy

black paper around a stick the size of a broom handle, and filling the shell with blasting powder, which was sealed with homemade soap. The cartridge was then stuck on the point of a copper "needle," a simple wire one-fourth of an inch thick, somewhat tapered at one end. It was forced into the hole with a "tamping bar," a heavy rod with a head at one end and a groove to fit the needle.

The next step was to tamp the cartridge tight with damp clay from the mine floor. The needle was then withdrawn, leaving a round hole leading to the cartridge. Shots were fired with homemade fuses called "squibs" which, the size of a pencil, held a small amount of powder in a folded piece of sulphur (slow-burning) paper.

When "touch paper," which was fast-burning, supplanted the other kind, the Pennsylvania Dutch miner's instinct for thrift asserted itself. To eliminate this expense, he used straws from his own wheat-fields or his neighbors'. He would ream out each straw, leaving a thin, hollow tube. When filled with blasting powder this made a safe and economical fuse, and was called a "German."¹³

The black powder in use then was dangerous. The miner bought it at the company store by the keg, and stored it at home. In a powder can called a "cadger" he carried one day's supply. Those old-timers thought nothing of setting off a charge with the naked light of their open-flame lamps, or of applying a crude match to a piece of cotton soaked in whale oil. Some even smoked their pipes around the powder. They learned safety the hard way.

The nineteenth-century miner was completely baffled by the mysterious sounds, sights, and odors he encountered underground. Each morning he took his life in one hand and his dinner pail in the other, kissed his wife and children goodbye, and walked off to the colliery knowing in his heart that he might never see them again. Inherently, coal mining is a hazardous occupation, but it was infinitely more so in the crude old days.

While no statistics of mine accidents were kept officially prior to 1869, it may be taken for granted that miners were injured or killed in Schuylkill County mine accidents prior to that date. For as early as June 20, 1840, the *Pottsville Miners' Journal* advocated the building of an "asylum" (hospital) for injured miners, to be maintained by the voluntary payment of one cent for each ton of coal delivered, customers paying the tax.

Before ambulances and miners' hospitals were created by the legislature, injured miners suffered much pain, and often died, before

they could be seen by a doctor. Patterson recalls an accident in which a miner had been burned by an explosion of gas. A butty got the miner to the surface, but he was still four miles from home, then the only place where he could obtain proper nursing and medical attention. The butty "asked the outside boss if he could do anything towards helping the man home," recalls Patterson. "The boss, though willing to do all he could, replied that they were blocked up with ashes at the boiler house, but he could put an extra hand on to get them out of the way, then the ash cart—the only means at hand—could be taken. The injured miner meantime was laid in the kindly shelter of a neighboring tree, oil was poured on his burned body, and blasting paper was used to cover the surface as the best substitute available for linen dressing. Dinner time arrived before the ash cart could be brought into requisition. Then followed a jolting ride over rough roads causing excruciating pain."¹⁴

No factor in coal mining was more important than good ventilation, because the miner's health, safety, and efficiency depended on it. Indeed his very life hung on it. Violent explosions resulting in mass death would suddenly expose the condition of bad ventilation in a coal mine; but the slow, unspectacular dying-by-inches to which many miners were subjected, eluded public attention. Only the miners really knew what it was like spending a whole day in subterranean holes, where the air was not only stagnant but reeked of acrid fumes of black-powder explosives, and was further polluted by coal dust, noxious gases, and the breathing of men and mules. Eventually, strong, vigorous constitutions cracked under such conditions. It was said that a half a dozen years working in an ill-ventilated mine changed the color of a man's lungs to that of mashed pokeberries; another six years made them almost black; and after a total of twenty years, the lungs lost their natural color, becoming as black as pitch. A common disease was miner's asthma, now known by the scientific name of anthracosis. A miner strong in every respect except for "blacklung" could not walk more than a few steps at a time because of shortness of breath.

Another important reason for good ventilation was the insidious presence of poisonous gases, or damp, that exhausted a miner's vitality and constantly threatened to explode. Hiding in minute pores or cracks in the coal seam, they escaped in the course of routine mining work.

The most common gas was firedamp (light carbureted hydrogen).

Being lighter than air, it was found near the roof of the chamber or breast where the miner performed his daily task. Its active agent is methane, sometimes known as marsh gas. If allowed to collect in dangerous quantities through bad ventilation, firedamp is highly explosive. Afterdamp is produced by an explosion of firedamp. Blackdamp (carbon dioxide mixed with an excess of nitrogen) came from the coal seam, but it was also generated by the miners' old-fashioned open-flame lamps, the exhalations of men and mules, decaying mine timber props, and decomposed strata. Being heavier than air, it was always found in a layer along the floor of a mine. It extinguished light and suffocated men, and so was commonly identified by the miners as "chokedamp." Whitedamp (carbon monoxide), like firedamp, resulted from mine fires and explosions, and often lingered in the air long enough to kill members of rescue parties before its presence could be detected. A sneaky enemy of man, this gas is colorless, tasteless, and odorless.

The English term "damp" derives from the German word, *Dampf*, meaning mist.¹⁵ Ancient German miners believed that mine gases collected and spread in the underground workings like a mist. At a later period they believed that the gases were the products of evil spirits, representing the breath of the devil. Originating in hell, they were believed to come as a warning to mankind to keep out of the lower world, which was part of His Satanic Majesty's dominion.¹⁶ There is no proof that these beliefs were prevalent among Pennsylvania anthracite miners; at least I never encountered them. On the other hand, there was not a miner who at one time or another in his career did not curse the mines as a hell of a place.

By inventing a safety lamp in 1815, Sir Humphrey Davy convinced British miners that mine gas is a natural phenomenon; a fine wire gauze inclosing the flame to keep it from igniting mine gas was the Davy lamp's safety feature. Fire bosses in the Swatara mines used it on their daily examinations of the mines. A fire boss started his rounds at 4 A.M., or three hours before the miners reported for work.

In the days before alarm clocks, who woke up the fire boss so early in the morning? His wife. Schuylkill County mines had no counterpart to the railroad industry's callboy. In the North-of-England mining region, coal operators employ a "caller" whose official duty it is to make the rounds of the mining villages about two hours before the start of work, to call the men who examine the mine in the morning before the miners enter.¹⁷

It was not until 1869 that the Pennsylvania Legislature gave the miners what they had need of most—ventilation and mine inspection. This “act for the better regulation and ventilation of mines, and for the protection of lives of the miners in the county of Schuylkill” also provided for the appointment of a mine inspector by the governor. The law went into effect on February 12, 1869, and in the next month, John Eltringham of Ashland was appointed mine inspector, the first in the United States to hold such a position.¹⁸

“Mine Inspector Eltringham was a very rotund personage, about as broad as he was long,” wrote Patterson. “It took quite a good-sized opening to let him through. And, of course, when he had difficulty in squeezing through a passageway, he instinctively emphasized his orders to the mine superintendent to make those airways larger. . . . The inspector’s report for that year (1869) shows that he visited 141 collieries, a great undertaking for one man. Being the first inspector, he had to strike out along original lines, having no precedents to follow.”¹⁹

The Eltringham report, covering the last nine months of 1869, must have influenced the legislature in passing, in 1870, a law creating the first hospital for the care of ill and injured miners. Schuylkill was the only county benefited by this legislation.

The nineteenth-century anthracite miner lived through a career cycle that was unique. John Mitchell, whose leadership of the 1902 anthracite strike raised him to the status of a folk hero in the anthracite region, summarized the cycle in these words:

First, a boy of eight or ten is sent to the breaker to pick the slate and other impurities from the coal which has been brought up from the mine; from there he is promoted and becomes a door boy, working in the mine; as he grows older and stronger he is advanced to the position and pay of a laborer; there he gains the experience which secures him a place as miner’s helper; and as he acquires skill and strength he becomes a full-fledged miner. If he is fortunate enough to escape the falls of rock and coal he may retain his position as a miner for a number of years; but as age creeps on and he is attacked by some of the many diseases incident to work in the mines, he makes way for those younger and more vigorous following him up the ladder whose summit he has reached. He then starts on the descent, going back to become a miner’s helper, then a mine laborer, now door-boy; and when old and decrepit, he finally returns to the breaker where he started as a child, earning the same wages as are received by the little urchins working at his side.²⁰

This pathetic cycle is described in song—one of the most moving of the anthracite miners' ballads—"The Old Miners' Refrain." The opening stanza goes like this:

I'm getting old and feeble and I cannot work no more,
I have laid my rusty mining tools away;
For forty years and over I have toiled about the mines,
But now I'm getting feeble, old and gray.
I started in the breaker and went back to it again,
But now my work is finished for all time;
The only place that's left me is the almshouse for a home,
Where I'm going to lay this weary head of mine.²¹

This was the sort of life generations of Pennsylvania Dutch miners experienced in the Swatara country. Their folkways deviated in some respects from the way of life common in the rest of the anthracite region. Until the 1870's, when the Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company firmly established its hegemony in the area, they were employees of numerous small mine operators with whom they shared some things in common—eighteenth-century German ancestry, Protestantism, and the Pennsylvania Dutch dialect.

These were some of the elements that made for a fluid society in which class lines were almost invisible. Another was the ease with which an individual or a partnership could go into mining. Invariably the coal land was leased, and royalties were paid out of production. As most of the early mines were drifts in a mountain gap or a tunnel in a hillside, where virtually all the work was performed by hand, capital outlay was held down to a minimum. In case of failure the loss was small. With a low risk the speculative inducement was correspondingly high. Thus, it did not take much money for a down payment on a mortgage to become a coal operator. Among the plungers were farmers, millers, timbermen, doctors, lawyers, clergymen, and, of course, miners. Indeed, so many miners speculated that for a period "miners" was the general term for those engaging in coal mining for profit. Members of the same family—father and son, brothers, brothers-in-law and cousins—sometimes found themselves on opposite sides of the economic fence. Status was fluid in a pioneer industry in which so many men speculated without adequate finances, and often went broke. Paternalism was not uncommon.

The informal labor-management relationship that Patterson, fresh from class-conscious England, encountered upon arrival in the West End in 1869, "astonished" him. He arrived in his mine patch during

what used to be called a "suspension," in time to observe wage negotiations between miners and coal operators:

I was astonished one day to see miners and coal operators discussing the question on the street corner. The men invited their employers to come to their meeting and talk over the matter. And sure enough next day the operators were there and they discussed the matter with their men.

The mine nearest the village was a new operation, and prices had not yet been fixed at it. It was arranged that a member of the firm who was also outside superintendent, and a splendid mechanic, should attend the meeting of the miners one afternoon and divulge to them what the proposed new terms were. He was a Pennsylvania Dutchman, the only member of the firm that lived in the village and was therefore closer to the mine workers than his partners. He was unsophisticated; no guile, no finesse in his make-up. But he was expected to be diplomatic in his parley with the men, and save all the discussions he could for his fellow operators. How well he carried out their expectations the reader may judge from what follows:

On invitation from the presiding officer of the meeting he got up, made a little speech, wound up by saying, "We have made up our minds to pay you five dollars a yard," and without a moment's pause, he continued, "and if you won't take that, we will pay you six dollars a yard."

The men at once laughingly responded, "We'll take the six dollars, Charlie! That's all right! Sound man, Charlie!"

One of the miners arose and congratulated the men on gaining so signal a victory. "And," said he, "Mr. Blank is present and hears what I say. I believe this will end all our wrangling about wages, and that we will have no more trouble on that score. If any little differences arise, we can settle them among ourselves." He then proposed, and the men present gave, three cheers first for the W. B. A., and next for each one of the operators in the district mentioned by name, and the meeting broke up with every one in good spirits. The suspension was now at an end. We were all extremely happy at the prospect of getting to work again at good wages.²²

Relations between early miners and individual coal operators in the Swatara country were not always as amicable as this anecdote might suggest. Although they all used the Dutch dialect in daily conversation, addressed one another by their Christian names, occasionally had a beer together in a tavern, and even attended the same church; nevertheless, they viewed the anthracite industry from opposite ends of the telescope. Coal operators had invested their money in expectation of profits, while the mineworkers demanded

more pay and better working conditions that inevitably cut down profits.

What I have tried to do in the preceding paragraphs was to give a glimpse of the primitive conditions under which the average Pennsylvania Dutch miner labored in the nineteenth century before Franklin B. Gowen took over the industry. Under Gowen, conditions were not improved for the average miner.

"A REVOLUTION IN THE COAL TRADE OF THIS REGION"

The above heading appears over an editorial in the *Pottsville Miners' Journal* of May 27, 1871, in which the newspaper gives its blessing to an announcement by the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad that it had entered the coal mining business through a subsidiary, the Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company. The *Journal* explained, in what amounted to a reversal of its editorial policy, that this Reading move would enable the Schuylkill field to compete on a more nearly equal basis with the big railroad-owned coal companies in the northern anthracite fields.

With dynamic, aggressive Franklin B. Gowen as president, the Reading did more than that. It forged ahead with such vigor that it became not only the leading anthracite producer and carrier, but also America's greatest corporation in its day.

"This first great American 'trust,'" observed R. W. Brown, president (1944-1952) of the Reading Railroad, "founded on the mining and transportation of anthracite, gained financial control of the lower anthracite fields and dominated the northern fields; it owned the railroad, great coal and iron companies, the Schuylkill Canal, a great ocean shipping enterprise and real estate measured in terms of miles. With size and the stifling of competition, greedy men obtained control of the Philadelphia & Reading, and the company became one of financial exploitation and manipulation . . ." ²⁴

In a word, it was no ordinary monopoly that had fastened its hold on Schuylkill County and its West End mining community, but the country's most powerful corporation.

The effects of this change were cataclysmic. For one thing, Pennsylvania Dutch ownership of the Swatara anthracite industry was

wiped out almost overnight. Ever since 1830 the believers in the doctrine of extreme individualism, who felt that each colliery should be separately owned by an individual or by two or more persons in a firm that was not incorporated, had dreaded corporate monopoly. Now they had it. Monopoly had taken over their small mining community. Franklin B. Gowen was, in fact, master of all he surveyed.

When Gowen first assumed the presidency in 1869, the Reading's debt was only seven million dollars with interest charges of \$400,000. With the acquisition of the vast tracts of coal lands, the company's indebtedness started to climb alarmingly. In five years he had increased the debt by sixty-five million dollars, almost twice the company's value when he had become its president in 1869. The yearly interest was now about four million dollars, slightly less than the company's average earnings during the same period.²⁵

Such financial manipulations inevitably caused trouble—serious trouble. The *Philadelphia Times* of May 22, 1880, carried the following ominous announcement:

The Philadelphia and Reading Company and the Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company have been compelled to suspend payment. The managers will take immediate measures to protect intact the property of both companies and continue their business.²⁶

Dramatic events followed swiftly:

There had been no such excitement in Philadelphia since the memorable day in September, 1873, when Jay Cooke and Company had closed its doors and carried the nation down into six years of depression. That day, in fact, had been a mild one, according to at least one observer, compared to Gowen's "Black Friday." Philadelphians were stunned by the news; in Pottsville an incredulous crowd stared at the quickly-posted bulletin.

Excited investors dumped their holdings in a wild flurry of selling, which sent the stock down from twenty-three to twelve and a half in an hour. The hastily assembled Board of Managers gathered in Gowen's office to decide what to do. Clerks ran back and forth with huge ledgers under their arms, while superintendents holding long statements in their hands hurried in to see Gowen. Reporters tried to interview the scurrying officials, but none of them would talk. . . .²⁷

On Monday, May 25, 1880, the P. & R. was declared bankrupt.²⁸ It would not be the only time the Company would go into receivership.

Under a reorganization plan, Gowen continued serving as presi-

dent until 1886 when he finally resigned. Three years later, on Friday, December 13, 1889, he occupied Room 57 in Wormley's Hotel, Washington, D. C. After locking the door to his room, he gazed into a mirror that hung above the fireplace mantel. In his right hand was a nickle-plated Smith and Wesson .38 revolver with a pearl handle. He aimed the revolver at his head . . . and fired.²⁹ He was only fifty-three.

"I believe it was caused purely by mortification over his failure in the management of the road," commented ex-Reading President Charles E. Smith, Gowen's immediate predecessor in office.³⁰

"... He fell through arrogance and, with the power gone, committed suicide," was the opinion of a latter-day president of the Reading Railroad, R. W. Brown.³¹

Gowen was mourned least by the mineworkers whose labor union, the W.B.A. (1867-1875), he had broken with brute force and starvation in the so-called long strike of 1875. Their feelings toward Gowen were expressed in several miners' traditional ballads. Here is a verse from one of them:

He says he is the workman's great admirer,
While we, in turn, say he's the great conspirer
Against our price, our liberties, our rights,
And the instigator of one-half our fights.³²

From 1875 to 1902, when the United Mine Workers of America under President John Mitchell was established, the anthracite region was unorganized. This quarter of a century or more is one of the darkest and most dismal periods in American labor history, when the worst forms of industrial feudalism were rampant in the hard-coal fields. The incredible abuses are documented in great detail in the record of President Theodore Roosevelt's Arbitration Commission that took testimony following the great anthracite miners' strike of 1902.

The coal operators played off one section against the other to keep the miners disorganized.

To continue paying dividends on its excessive capitalization, chiefly the result of overexpansion in coal lands, the Reading used every device in the book to keep wages low. At the same time, it threw its weight around in the marketplace until the government itself called a halt. According to Reading President Brown:

Owning a natural resource, controlling its production, transportation and price, and dictating policy and price of competitors,

was not in the public interest. It violated the very spirit of free enterprise and today we do not condone nor would the laws allow the actions of our predecessors. In time, a restraining hand appeared and that hand was Government in the interest of the people. The old Reading industrial empire finally was dissolved by the Supreme Court.³³

MINERS' BREAD

How strange a thing is bread.
 If we have it not most surely we can't live;
 And yet, to win it, so many men must die!
 My father was a miner, down beyond,
 And it's little of him ever I have seen;
 But I mind me of a loud and thund'ring crash,
 And a wailing, and a rushing to the pit,
 And a line of shatter'd forms upon the ground,
 And my father lying 'midst them, cold and dead—
 Dead for bread!*

ONE OF THE STRANGEST SIGHTS IN THE WEST END IS AN EPITAPH ON A marble tombstone relating a pithy story of murder and its aftermath. Like a lone sentinel it stands in the cemetery of Christ Union Church in the village of Fountain in the Hegins Valley. For eighty years this murder story in marble has attracted countless sightseers. Even if it were uprooted and carried away by a hurricane, this tombstone would still be talked about, so firmly is it embedded in local tradition.

At the top of the tombstone is a bas-relief of a weeping willow

* Excerpt from an English song, "The Toilers," by M. Piccolomini, recorded by George Korson in Dugger, Indiana, May 18, 1940. See p. 67 of Korson, *Coal Dust on the Fiddle* (Philadelphia, 1943).

tree, around which are inscribed the words, "In memory of the innocent death of," and immediately under it, in block letters, the victim's name, "Henry A. Stutzman." Then—

Son of Wm. A. & Catharine Stutzman. Born November 9, 1849. Came to his death in his own house, Adams Co., Neb[raska] Feb. 8, 1879 by the murderous hands of Wm. John McElroy, who ten days after was tried and found guilty of murder in first degree, was sentenced by Hon. Judge Gaslen to be executed May 29, 1879. Afterwards claimed and was granted a second trial, plead guilty in second degree, and was sentenced by same Judge to imprisonment for life at hard labor.

Attorneys for Commonwealth were T. D. Scofield, Gen. Bowen, and Hon. James Laird.

Aged 29 years, 2 mos. & 29 days.

Funeral sermon was preached by B. S. Metzger, V.D.M. based on Matt. 10:28, assisted by Revs. R. Duenger and D. Sanner.

And at the bottom, over to the right, in small letters, appears the name, "J. L. Deck."

The weeping willow motif and the terse style combine to make this epitaph an outstanding one in what has been described as the "literature of the masses." The story behind it, revealed by the grandson and namesake of the "William A. Stutzman" inscribed on the stone, is quite interesting.

The murder victim—Henry A. Stutzman—had been a Nebraska homesteader for five years at the time of the tragedy. When his father, William A. Stutzman, received the sad news, he left immediately for the West. After settling his son's estate, he brought the body back to Fountain for burial in Stutzman ancestral soil. The funeral services were simple and solemn.

The father ordered a marble tombstone from J. L. Deck, a Tremont dealer in memorials and a skilled stonecutter, for which he agreed to pay fifty dollars. Nothing but the best for his boy. The words for the epitaph would be along in a few days.

William A. Stutzman had loved his son dearly, and he wanted to share his profound grief with the whole world—until that Judgment Day when Gabriel will blow his horn. Long and hard he pondered over the epitaph. It had to be "just so."

Deck, the stonecutter, took one look at it and threw up his hands in protest. Too many words. They would take up the entire tombstone. "That's right, the entire tombstone," echoed the father. He

had figured on doing just that. He was paying for it, wasn't he? Deck said he would lose money on the deal if he had to inscribe all those words. There was pride of authorship as well as loyalty to a memory involved here, and Grandfather Stutzman stood his ground. He wouldn't change a comma. "Take it or leave it," in effect was his answer.

As Deck had anticipated, he lost money on the order; but he didn't mind it after all, because he was so proud of his craftsmanship. That is why he inscribed his name at the bottom of the tombstone.

The epitaph attracted immediate attention. Those who had read it told their friends, neighbors, and relatives who, in turn, told others in an ever-widening circle. Thus, by word of mouth, a legend was born and diffused. Long after 1879, people from far and near came to satisfy their curiosity about this strange epitaph in a remote country churchyard.

Most closely associated with the tombstone today is the contemporary William A. Stutzman, retired farmer-coal miner, whose white frame farmhouse along Route 25 (Newton-Millersburg) is a short distance from the cemetery.

Although I had heard about it, the epitaph was not what had brought me to the Stutzman farm on August 15, 1957. That morning my quest had been for home remedies prepared by mining families from plants growing around collieries. I had heard that Stutzman was a local authority on the subject.

When I explained my mission, Stutzman smiled courteously, and invited me into his house where I plugged in my recording machine. He was nearly sixty-eight years old, gentle and soft-spoken. His gold-rimmed spectacles rested casually on his nose. His ruddy complexion reflected many years' exposure to the sun. He wore faded but clean blue overalls, and a cotton workshirt, open at the collar; and his sleeves were rolled up to the elbows.

His appearance was that of an elderly Pennsylvania Dutch farmer, and I was somewhat surprised to have him reveal that he had also been a coal miner for many years. Those blue-black marks of a veteran anthracite miner, representing tiny particles of coal lodged permanently under the skin, were missing from his tanned face. But I should have observed his stoop. Miners get that way after years of bending in low coal.

Appetizing odors kept wafting in from the kitchen as I recorded

Stutzman in the living room. When we finished it was dinnertime, and my driver, Carl F. Maurer, and I were invited to join Stutzman, his wife, who is of Welsh descent, and their son, Paul.

Typically Pennsylvania Dutch, the round dining table, set in the middle of the large kitchen, groaned from its heavy burden of steaming food, the sight of which caused my gustatory nerve to tingle—a large platter of meat, a mound of mashed potatoes with butter melting in the middle, dishes of corn, beans, pickled beets, and home-made bread and coffee. I must not overlook the two big pies—one lemon, the other apple—only a minute or two out of the oven, which were cooling tantalizingly at the far end of the table—that is, far from me. I looked in vain for the seven sweets and seven sour, the mythical favorites of feature writers who deal with the Pennsylvania Dutch.

Everything tasted so good that I readily accepted Mrs. Stutzman's offer of seconds—with one exception. Pie. Having had more than I should of the roast meat, I had no room for a second helping of apple pie. The roast meat had been especially good, and so, impulsively, but with all the sincerity in the world, I complimented the cook on her roast beef.

"Oh, it ain't roast beef," she chuckled.

"No?"

"No, it's roast pork."

Roast pork is not usually in my diet, but it certainly tasted good that day.

William A. Stutzman is a typical example of the many Pennsylvania Dutch farmers in the Swatara country who took advantage of employment opportunities created by the anthracite industry without sacrificing the beloved acres inherited from their forebears.

The Stutzmans originally were Palatine Germans and Swiss. The first Stutzman ancestor in the United States was Johann Jacob Stutzman who arrived in the ship *Adventurer* at New York on October 2, 1727. According to family tradition, Johann's wife and all his children except two sons—Christian and Jacob—died during the long voyage from Rotterdam. To pay for the passage, the first ancestor bound out his two surviving sons as indentured servants, and returned to Europe. Other Stutzman families arrived at Philadelphia in 1741 and 1752. The common ancestor of all the Hegins Valley branch of the Stutzman family is Christian, who married Catherine Ecket, "across the Blue Mountain," in 1788.

The Stutzmans have long been prominent citizens in the Hegins Valley—big landowners, farmers, tavern keepers, and millers. At one time, one of William Stutzman's ancestors—Peter Stutzman—owned nearly all the land in Fountain.¹

Originally Amish and Mennonites, the Stutzmans later became Lutheran and Reformed, and when Christ Union Church was organized in 1874 they were the most active members. The church building was built of Stutzman-donated lumber.²

William Stutzman told me that he combined farm work with coal mining for about a quarter of a century, starting in 1921, when he was about thirty-two, and retiring in 1946. As to the amount of labor required to operate a farm and work in the mines simultaneously, Stutzman gave me an example. Between 1924 and 1936 he had a dairy herd, the number of cows ranging from time to time between ten and twenty-five. Winter or summer, all had to be milked before he set out for the colliery. The number of cows usually governed his waking time. For instance, when the herd stood at ten cows, he got up at 4:30. His son, Paul, began helping to milk cows when he turned six.

THE WOMAN'S ANGLE

Obviously when a farmer worked in the mines some or all of his chores were taken over by his wife and children, with occasional assistance from a hired hand. Boys farmed until they were ten or eleven when they, too, entered the industry, usually as breaker boys.³

So Mom was often left holding the proverbial bag. In keeping with an old Pennsylvania Dutch custom, farm women have always worked hard, and so these miners' wives accepted their new burdens uncomplainingly.

How did the arrangement work out in practice?

I got my answer from a *Hausfrau* (housewife) on the afternoon of August 28, 1957, when I held a recorded interview with Mrs. Grant Deaven and her husband on the front porch of their comfortable home at Inwood, Lebanon County. This was one of several villages that had grown up around stations of the Reading Railroad after the Lincoln miners' train had been started between Pine Grove and the borough of Lebanon early in the present century. All along the

line were farms, of varying dimensions between the mountains, owned by men who worked at the Lincoln Colliery. These men made good miners because they were inured to hard work. Being resourceful, they were able to cope with problems that came up inside the mines. Most of them were contract miners who got so much a yard for driving a gangway, so much a car for work in the breast where the coal was brought out. Although the standard wage around the turn of the century was only about two dollars a day, these Pennsylvania Dutchmen were so industrious and thrifty that they were able to build themselves modest but nice homes at Green Point and other villages around the railroad stations.

The Deavens were of this mold. Their home, a former roadside tavern, had an idyllic setting surrounded by eleven acres. Before coming here several years ago to spend their declining years, they had lived on a farm of their own which Mrs. Deaven worked for many of the twenty-seven years that her husband was employed in the Lincoln Colliery. At the time of the interview, Mr. Deaven was seventy-nine, and while his wife did not reveal her age, she was not too far behind him in seniority; but her intelligence, wit, and agility surely belied her age, whatever it was.

At first Mrs. Deaven was shy as a bird of my microphone, pleading inexperience. Her real reason for coyness, I suspected, was sensitivity because of her Pennsylvania Dutch accent, which I thought delightful. Once she assented, however, she talked through the mike in a relaxed manner like an old pro.

Her story follows:

When my husband was working at the Lincoln and we lived on the farm, I used to get up around three o'clock in the morning to make his breakfast and get him ready for the Lincoln miners' train. He got up at half past three. He had to leave the house at 4:15 to make the train, which came up at Green Point Station at a quarter before five. It was a three-mile walk to the station.

In the winter, when the weather wasn't so good, he batched in a shanty at the colliery for two nights, and then he came home one night, and then stayed the other two nights up there, and then came home on Saturday night. The shanties belonged to the miners. They put them up and furnished them.

Mister liked mining. That's the only work he wanted to do. He'd rather be a miner than a farmer. He didn't like farming so good. I didn't want him to work in the mines, but that's what he wanted to do. Oh, sometimes, if he didn't come home on time, I worried. I was so nervous I just had to read 'til he came in.

He had good luck, though. In all the time he worked at the colliery he was hurt only once—in the hand.

It was a good income when the mines worked, but, see, they didn't work so good. When we were first married Mister brought home only six or seven dollars for two weeks' work, they worked so poor. Then the Company took off for something they called "beneficials," fifty cents a month, and for mining supplies.

When Grant worked at the colliery somebody had to look after the house, the farm, the chickens, the cows, the hogs and our two boys—and their daddy. That was the job I had.

It was a pretty long day, starting with breakfast. Almost every morning Grant had eggs, laid by our own chickens. He's still fond of eggs. For his lunch (when he wasn't batching) I packed half a pie. He liked his egg custard pie. Bread, pies and cakes I baked myself. His lunch kettle also had a couple of sandwiches of ham, pork, beef. Sometimes one of these, sometimes two and sometimes all three kinds of meat. We butchered four or five hogs a year and maybe a steer; made our own sausages and our own ham and beef. We salted some of the meat, pickled it in brine. That kept it for some time. And then we smoked a great deal of it, like hams, sausages, and the summer baloney.

My husband also had some kind of fruit for his lunch. When he batched at the colliery he'd pick up some things to eat at the Lincoln store.

My house chores started after I saw my husband off to the miners' train. I made breakfast for our two boys, did the breakfast dishes and made the beds. I often got my bread ready. I done my milking (we had four or five cows) and separated my milk, and churned my butter. At least once a week I also did the family wash. And I had my chores almost all done 'til it got daylight.

Everything we ate came off our farm. We always had a lot of vegetables—potatoes and sweet potatoes, cabbages, beans, tomatoes, carrots and the like; and fruits like peaches, cherries and apples. I did a lot of canning for the winter. I often made sauerkraut, but that's something Mister didn't eat. He's pretty sneaky, I can tell you.

Do you know what's his favorite dish? Bean soup. That's what I made for him when he batched at the colliery. He'd carry it to his shanty and warm it on the shanty stove. Bean soup is what I cooked for him the evening he came home for supper after batching two nights. I used a hunk of ham or beef. That gives good bean soup.

After I done my chores I went out on the fields and helped do the farm work. Just me and the boys did the field work. I husked corn, I mowed with the mower, and I was on the binder and everything like that.

Our boys helped on the farm until they were old enough for

the mines. We wanted them to go to high school, but, see, they would rather be miners like their daddy.

I always fetched Grant and the boys from the miners' train when they came home in the evening. Through the summer I drove a car (when we had one) and through the winter I fetched them in a horse and sleigh.

In the summertime, whenever there was evening work to be done on the farm, we had supper and then all of us went out on the fields and did what had to be done until it got dark. Mister usually pitched hay into the barn that we had piled up during the day. On these evenings I always left my supper dishes stay until we were done. Then I had to do my dishes and things yet.

Sometimes it was eleven o'clock already when I went to bed, and I was up again around three in the morning.

Now, since we are living down here and I'm getting old, I can't work so fast no more. I can't see how I done it on the farm.

I couldn't do it now no more.⁴

PRODUCE AND COOKERY

Integration of agriculture with industry, which enables a small farmer to stay on his farm while working in a factory, was pioneered by the Pennsylvania Dutch when they first invaded the anthracite valleys early in the nineteenth century.

In Pennsylvania there are many family-size farms that might have been doomed if their owners had been employed regularly in industry. The eight-hour shift and the five-day week leave enough time for a man to perform farm chores, especially if he uses efficient methods and has modern labor-saving machinery. Today the family car and good highways link farms with cities where industry is located, cutting traveling time to a minimum. Industry balances the economy, and the industrial pay check, supplementing farm income, enables rural families to enjoy virtually the same standard of living as their cousins in urban areas.

A century and a half ago, when Pennsylvania Dutch farmers first sought employment in the anthracite industry, they had too strong an instinct for agriculture to break away from it completely. Their succeeding generations have had the same attitude. Being a convenient pool of competent, hard-working and dependable labor, they had little trouble convincing prospective coal operators that it was to

their mutual interest for them, the workers, to stay on the farm while working in the mines. A coal operator who accepted this arrangement spared himself the expense of building a mine patch of company houses, and the headaches that often went with maintaining one.

Even when expedience forced a man to give up his farm, he never forgot his agricultural skills and traditions. They went with him no matter where he went. Love of the soil was in his blood. The average Pennsylvania Dutch mineworker, for example, liked nothing better than to tend his vegetable garden in the evening after supper. It was a common sight to see miners diligently working outdoors in the dark, as in a coal mine, with the aid of their miners' lamps.

The soil was taxed to the limit of its capacity. As one vegetable came to maturity, another was planted in its place. There were white and sweet potatoes, peas, tender onion shoots, lettuce, celery, corn for boiling and roasting, turnips, endive, cabbage, tomatoes, and many other vegetables. Some of the crop went on the table immediately; but among the thrifty, most of it was preserved in one form or another for winter eating.

In the days before modern refrigeration, there were different ways of keeping vegetables. One method was to dig a deep hole in the ground and fit a barrel into it for the storage of vegetables. Some miners dug furrows one foot deep in which the vegetables were stored. The opening was covered with a layer of straw or dead leaves, and weighted down with rough boards. The idea probably came from the ground cellars for winter vegetable storage found on many Pennsylvania Dutch farms.

The vegetables thus remained fairly fresh until early December, and were drawn upon during the fall months. After December a family lived on its canned goods. The average cellar would contain from three hundred to five hundred cans and jars of homemade things the housewife had put up during the season. The miner could not have afforded in those days (sixty or more years ago) to go to the store and buy a can of corn or peas. He did not have the income. So, in season, when fruits and vegetables were cheap, he supplemented his own garden produce and had his wife can, pack, and store them in the cellar, to be brought up and put on the table during the winter.

In a Pennsylvania Dutch miner's backyard, there was sure to be a pigsty with one to four pigs. Virtually every family kept pigs. In Pine Grove:

I remember that you could go down the alley, you know, and you'd see the old pig sties there. They were no longer in use but they were still standing. In fact, there was one in back of my home, and one in back of my grandfather's home. And the story is that on a Sunday morning my grandfather would walk up and down the alley, and he'd look at the other hogs that the people were raising, and he'd compare them with his own: his ambition always was to have the fattest hogs. Sunday morning was a sort of inspection period. Those people would get into heated arguments about the size of their hogs. When the borough got too large and the thing was considered unsanitary, an ordinance was passed against keeping pigs within borough limits.⁵

One of the customs carried into town from the farm was communal butchering in the fall. Of course there were individualists, as recollected by Miss Anna Salen, daughter of a miner and herself a retired school teacher in Tremont:

We always had pigs. We raised our own. If we didn't have a steer, Pop would buy a quarter of beef, you know, and then he would cut it up. He was always very, very good at butchering and at seasoning. He was a wonderful seasoner. As long as he could do it he bought pigs, which he killed and cleaned himself. He would make sausage, pudding and scrapple—oh! brother!—the real stuff. The smoked sausage hung in the closet, and if you wanted a piece you went and got it and ate it, and you didn't have to ask.⁶

More often, several families joined in buying a steer and dividing it, or they bought a hind quarter or a fore quarter, or half a beef, which they used in their butchering.

Occasionally, a larger group of town families joined to engage an itinerant butcher who killed the beef in one day and slaughtered, scalded, and hung up several pigs by sunrise. A ritual was made of cutting both the beef and the pork on the same day, when the community was in a festive mood. The dinner on this occasion was especially enjoyable because it was just about the only time of the year when fresh meats were consumed. After a hearty dinner the men made sausages and meat pudding, while the women occupied themselves preparing scrapple, or *Pawnhaas*, from the broth in which the meat pudding had been boiled.

This communal activity was preparation for the grim winter months. The saying was that any housewife who cut a ham before Easter was inefficient. Butchering families had a smokehouse in the backyard where the meats were smoked—chiefly ham and bacon,

sausages, so-called summer sausage, which was bologna—and where the smoked meats were kept during the winter. Some meats were preserved by pickling in brine. Smoked meats kept better in the warm spring and summer months, and for that reason were customarily left to be eaten last.

Apple butter, favorite Pennsylvania Dutch spread, remained popular with former farmers in mining towns. As the making of this spread was a long and tedious process, the task was usually accomplished through the communal efforts of young men and women assembled for a *Schnitzen* party. Coquettish repartee and uninhibited laughter accompanied nimble fingers paring, coring, and quartering sweet apples. There were also parlor games, riddles, storytelling, and the singing of folk songs.

When the tubs were filled with prepared apples, the first part of the process was finished. While the merrymaking was going on inside the house, several women were taking turns stirring new cider which was being boiled in large copper kettles over an outdoor fire. The prepared apples, and sugar and spice, were then poured into the cider. The whole was now stirred more vigorously than ever to prevent scorching. When the desired consistency was reached, the apple butter was pronounced done.

To miners, bread is not only a food but a symbol of their dangerous way of life. It was for bread that they risked their lives. It was for bread that they often starved in prolonged strikes. Thus bread looms prominently on the miner's table and in his dinner pail.

Most of the bread consumed by Pennsylvania Dutch miners in the West End was homebaked in outdoor bakeovens. It was made from yeast dough mixed and set to rise the evening before baking.

Built of stone with an arched roof, and covered on the outside with lime, the outdoor oven resembled an igloo. A fire was started inside with newspapers and kindling wood and was built up progressively with heavier timber. It was allowed to burn itself out until only ashes remained. Without the aid of a thermometer, each housewife had her individual way of knowing "til it was just so." One woman placed a piece of newspaper on the oven floor, and if it smoked, curled, and turned brown, the interior was still too hot.⁷ A seventy-nine-year-old miner's widow, a mother of miners in the Hegins Valley, who owned one of these outdoor ovens and had baked in it for years, recalled that she used a rag dipped in a bucket of water to swab the oven floor. This gave her the clue to the oven's right

temperature. Then she scraped out the wood ashes and slid the loaves inside.

In many mine patches, batteries of communal bakeovens were provided for tenants. The management worked out a schedule of baking days which housewives were asked to follow. Everything worked well until one maverick took it into her head to pre-empt a neighbor's baking day. Trouble then ensued.

Cookery is one of the fields in which the Pennsylvania Dutch have had a lasting influence on the rest of the population in the anthracite region. Mining families of every national origin—Americans all—have made traditional Dutch dishes part of their diet.

What is generally known as "Dutch salad," and relished in the summer months, is a regional adaptation of what residents of Allentown, Bethlehem, Reading, and Lancaster know as dandelion salad. It is made with young tender plants eaten in the early spring immediately after they are picked in the fields. Coal region cooks may vary the vegetables. Usually they are garden lettuce, tomatoes, and maybe, endive. But the Pennsylvania Dutch tradition is followed in one important respect—a hot bacon dressing is used. An indication of the dressing's popularity is that it is found in nearly all Pennsylvania Dutch cookbooks.

Sauerkraut is too well known for comment here, except to point out that it was a favorite with Pennsylvania Dutch miners. Together with a boiled potato and ribs of pork it makes a widely popular meal; and there are other combinations. Most families made their own fermented sauerkraut.

Schnitz un Gnepp, or *Knepp*, however mispronounced and misspelled, is another traditional Pennsylvania Dutch dish that has made a permanent place for itself on the tables of the mining population. It is simply dried sweet apples and balls of dough cooked with ham.

Dutch mining families went in heavily for dumplings, or "boiled dough," as it was commonly called. Potatoes, apples, chicken, and a variety of meats were cooked with dumplings. There were even apple dumplings without the apples, as one of my Pottsville informants pointed out. It was just boiled dough served with sugar and cream.

A steady diet of dumplings could get quite monotonous after a while even for those who professed a liking for them. One day a boarder, probably an outlander, who had been fed dumplings until they were

running out of his ears, was asked to say grace, and he responded as follows:

Dumplings hot and dumplings cold,
Dumplings new and dumplings old;
Dumplings tender and dumplings tough,
Thank the Lord, we have had enough.

KETTLES AND BOTTLES

A young miner's bride placed a jelly sandwich (among other food) in the first dinner pail she packed for him after returning from their honeymoon. The miner did not eat the sandwich and brought it home. The next day in the coal mine he was surprised to find the same sandwich in his dinner pail, and put it right back. The same thing occurred on the third day. By that time his fellow miners had seen the humor in the incident and joked about it, which embarrassed the youthful miner. When the jelly sandwich showed up in his dinner pail on the fourth day, he said to himself, "Enough is enough." In an angry mood he threw the sandwich to the mine rats staring at him out of their beady, hungry eyes.

That evening he spoke to his bride about it for the first time. "I don't like jelly sandwiches," he said firmly.

"Silly boy," was her reply. "Why didn't you tell me the first time that you didn't like jelly sandwiches? I would've been glad to make you some other kind of sandwich."

"Well, I was too shy," he mumbled.

Thus wives learned early in their married life the importance of packing the right food in their husbands' dinner pails, for they had healthy appetites. The miners liked one or two smoked meat sandwiches—ham, pork, bacon, beef, sausages, and bologna—and home-made bread, a vegetable and a fruit, half a pie and homemade cake. Pennsylvania Dutch miners did not consider pie and cake as dessert, but rather as part of a meal. In the dessert category were oranges, bananas, and other tropical fruits that appeared in the mining towns only now and then.

Apple-butter spread was packed into each dinner pail because it tasted good with every combination of food. Eating a slice of home-

made rye bread with a generous spread of *Schmierkaes* (cottage cheese), and a substantial layer of apple butter over that, was enough to make a miner forget the dingy and bleak surroundings of a coal mine. Even mine mules were partial to apple butter, with or without the *Schmierkaes*, and many a miner requested his wife to pack an extra slice for his favorite mule.

Years ago in the Lincoln Colliery, a mineworker named Adams from Lebanon County talked Dutch to his favorite mule, and what's more, the mule understood him; at least, that's what Adams said. The worker never opened his dinner pail without offering the mule the first bite out of his apple-butter spread, with or without the *Schmierkaes*, and he always said the same thing to the mule—in Lebanon County Dutch, of course—"Don't take such a big bite already. I want some of it, too."⁸

In the West End a miner carried his underground dinner in a two-quart round container termed a "kettle." He rated his wife on her skill in packing this kettle with the kind of food that would sustain him through a ten-hour, or an eight-hour, shift. Packing the kettle was her job and he let her handle it without interference except when he thought he had reason to complain. To perform this task to his complete satisfaction and prepare his heavy breakfast, too, often required the little woman to get out of bed a half hour to an hour before her husband.

The miner carried into the mine not only his dinner but also his drinking supply. The mine water, sulphurous and dirty, was unfit for human consumption. The canteen in which he carried his liquid was elliptical and about as tall as the kettle. Sometimes it was filled with plain water, sometimes with one tea or another, but most often with coffee, strong or weak, according to the taste of the individual miner. Kettle and bottle were slung across a man's shoulder with a rope, resting back of the arm to permit freedom in walking.

Some Pennsylvania Dutch miners liked limburger cheese, but seldom carried it into the mines because of their fellow workers' objection to its pungent smell. A Williamstown miner's wife laughingly recalled an occasion when the cheese performed a function unknown to dietitians.

Her husband and brother, she said, worked as "locie" operators in a coal mine near Valley View. At a certain location there was a shanty heated by a little pot-bellied stove where the motormen could dry themselves and warm up. There were not enough benches, so

some of the men had to stand. The brothers-in-law, working in a remote part of the mine, often were the last to arrive at the shanty, and stood during the rest period. On one of those days, tired and wet from perspiration and mine water, they arrived late as usual.

My informant's husband, seeing that all the benches were filled, demanded, "Well, ain't you guys gonna make room for us?"

Silence.

"All right," he said, "this'll make yez hop."

With that he opened his dinner kettle, took out a piece of limburger cheese and threw it on the hot stove. As it sizzled it gave off an unbearable stench which caused the men to flee as if they were escaping from a cave-in.

In less than a minute the shanty had been cleared out, and the laughing brothers-in-law had the whole place to themselves.⁹

TURKEY GO HOME

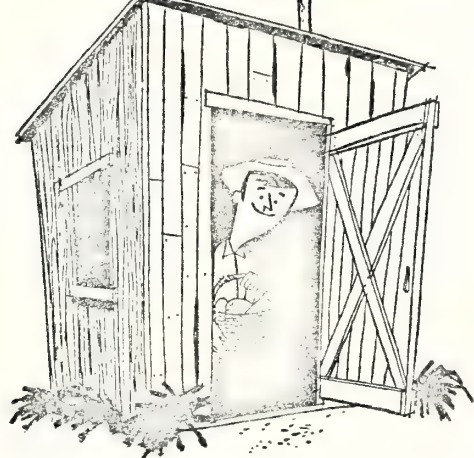
Once upon a time there were two fellows who lived along the Ledersville Road. One was called Hank and the other was called Pitt. They both raised turkeys. Hank had a gobbler that was especially attractive, and every time Pitt passed Hank's place and saw this gobbler he thought, "This is a picture of a turkey!"

Finally he decided to ask the gobbler to go home with him. So one dark night he saw where this gobbler was roosting, and he picked him up and took him along home.

Well, when Hank missed his handsome gobbler he suspected where he might be—in Pitt's flock—and there he found him. "But," he thought, "I'll leave him there now. I'll let Pitt feed the turkey now until Thanksgiving time comes around, and then I'll fetch him home."

And so, just before Thanksgiving time, Hank went to the tree where he had seen his turkey roosting, and began to climb up to get him. Startled, the turkey raised his head and, in the manner of turkeys, gobbled, "Pitt! Pitt! Pitt!"

"No, you're wrong," said Hank. "This isn't Pitt. This is Hank. I've come to bring you home."¹⁰



II

SHANTIES AND POSSESSION HOUSES

THE MINE PATCH WAS A SYMBOL OF THE INDUSTRIAL FEUDALISM THAT gripped the anthracite region in the nineteenth century. British and later immigrants, having no other place to go upon arrival, were herded into one or another of these company-owned, unincorporated villages. The Pennsylvania Dutch, descendants of a people who had breathed the free air of Penn's Woods for generations, recoiled from them.

This is not to say that there were no Pennsylvania Dutch in mine patches. There were, but they represented a minority. The majority either continued living on their farms or else moved into villages and boroughs where they were free to rent, buy, or build homes for themselves.

Those who lived too far from their colliery for either daily walking or daily commuting by train, as did the miners of Lebanon County working at the Lincoln Colliery, would spend the week in so-called "batching" (bachelor) shanties on company property. On weekends they were at home.

The one-room shanty that began appearing at West End collieries as early as 1837 symbolized the Pennsylvania Dutch miners' individualism.¹ While occupying company land, the shanties were individually owned by the men who had built them. There was no

ground rent to pay, and they were free to come and go as they pleased. A shanty was a man's "home away from home," where he enjoyed privacy.

The fact that the powerful Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company, in a period otherwise marked by harsh company discipline, could make such a concession, was a remarkable tribute to the farmer-miners.

BATCHING SHANTIES AT LINCOLN COLLIERY

The Lincoln, named for the martyred President, was one of the collieries to have batching shanties. With its loss in 1930 the West End suffered an economic blow from which it may never recover. Many of its long-time workers felt sentimental toward the Lincoln like sailors toward an old ship.

The Lincoln Colliery had been a Pennsylvania Dutch institution. Opened in 1869 by Levi Miller, Sr., one of the most prominent independent coal operators, it immediately took its place as the largest and most advanced in the Swatara country, a position it maintained to the end. The majority of its mineworkers were Pennsylvania Dutch, and the tongue most often heard in and around the colliery was the Dutch dialect. This was true even under the Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company, which had acquired the colliery in 1876.²

The first bloodshed was also Pennsylvania Dutch; John Schell died in 1870. On the other hand, there were men who spent a lifetime underground without suffering serious injury. The miners believed in the luck of the mine—"One taken, and the other left." For example, there was one man, Thomas B. Conway, whose mining career spanned the entire history of the Lincoln, from August 1, 1870, the first shipping day, to the final closing in May, 1930. Another, Henry Kimmel of Lorberry, had worked an even half century at the time of the shutdown.³ And there was Henry E. Wertz, night-shift foreman, who spent his entire seventy-five years at Lincoln. Born in the village, the son of a mineworker, he began his own career at eleven as a breaker boy.⁴

Beginning with approximately 400 employees in 1869, the Lincoln ended its days with about 1,200 employees. Over a period of years

its average daily tonnage varied between 1,800 and 2,000. At the time of its closing, this average had fallen to 1,500 tons a day.⁵

The Lincoln had worked all the six separate seams in the Lykens Valley Series. The coal, known for its deep pink, or red, ash, was shipped principally to Canada, New England, and Baltimore.

The colliery had two underground slopes that started at a water-level drift. All the coal was hauled out of this drift to the surface. Both slopes hoisted coal. The men who worked in the No. 2 Slope section walked into the drift to the top of No. 2 Slope and from there were lowered to one of four lifts. They left their work using the No. 2 Slope to get to the water level, and walked to the surface from there. The men who worked in the No. 1 Slope section were lowered to work by way of the 870-foot water-hoisting shaft; water hoisting of the mine drainage was discontinued in 1927 when centrifugal pumps were installed. The colliery had electric haulage for many years prior to its closing.⁶

Although the colliery and the miners' shanties are gone, there is still some life left in Lincoln village, centering in the general store owned and operated by Mrs. Clara R. (Henry E.) Wertz since 1923. From that year until 1930, her store served three groups of customers: about thirty mine bosses' families living in company houses; the miners who came in daily on the Lincoln miners' train; and the men who batched in the shanties.

When the colliery was closed, the village of Lincoln became virtually a ghost town. Slowly, as families bought boarded-up company houses and installed inside plumbing and shingled and repainted the outside, the village revived. Now twenty-eight families are living there.

The miners' one-room shanties, however, are gone forever. Only the memory lingers—mostly the recollections of Mrs. Wertz whom I interviewed in her store on October 2, 1957. She knew the shanty miners as well as anybody because she spoke their language—the Dutch dialect. They had spent much of their time in her store, making purchases, gossiping, and swapping yarns.

The following is a vignette of the shanties and their occupants as Mrs. Wertz remembers them:

Most of the miners who batched during the week came from homes too far away for them to travel on the daily miners' train. They came off farms and villages along the Reading Railroad between Pine Grove and the borough of Lebanon. They were nearly all married men with families whom they saw weekends.

On Monday mornings they would jump off the Lincoln miners' train on the double. Always running; this was their custom. On one arm, and sometimes on both, they would carry basketfuls of food for a week, and some fresh linens. They headed for their shanties where they left everything, changed into their working clothes, and then hustled off to the mine. There was a reason for their hurry. This was before portal-to-portal pay. Starting time was at seven o'clock at their own working place, and so they tried to get down before the seven o'clock whistle blew.

The shanties were spread out from about a hundred yards to a quarter of a mile west and northwest from my place.

There were no big bunkhouses here. The men wouldn't live in them. Most of our shanties were one-room affairs with a lean-to in the back for a single wooden bunk built into the wall. There were a few shanties for two men, and for four men, but most of the shanties accommodated only one miner who owned it and took care of it himself.

The shanties were pretty well weather-proofed—paper lining inside and tar paper outside.

I was never inside one of these shanties. Women were not allowed. But from what the men told me I know that there was no covering on the floor and the walls were bare. A plank or two nailed into the wall served as a dining table. Daytime light came from a single window, while at night they burned coal oil, which they bought from me. The lamps usually hung from wall brackets. For cooking and heating they usually had a one-lid stove, but some had larger stoves. The men got their coal free by picking it off the dirt banks, which had a lot of small-sized coal.

When the men loafed in my store they spoke only Dutch. I think due to me being able to talk Dutch I had more of the men buying from me, and buying more of their needs. When I first took over this store, the men would bring a full supply of food from home. Later, when I carried a larger stock than the lady did before me, they bought more here and carried less from home.

They even got to liking my cooking, but I could not serve too many of them. Lebanon bologna was the most popular lunch meat then. They liked scrapple and fresh sausage for breakfast. Very often I had seven or eight pots on the stove boiling some kind of meat for their supper. Most of the men liked pie and cake, especially shoofly pie. I often baked this pie for the batchers.

They bought a lot of other things from me—socks, work shoes, handkerchiefs, shirts, overalls, miners' carbide lights—and, of course, chew tobacco. They were not allowed to smoke in the mines, so they chewed tobacco on account of the coal dust. "Redman" was the most popular brand. It came in ten-cent and fifteen-cent packs and I would buy all I could get a hold of to sell to my customers.

Everything was sold on tick. At times my books showed over eight hundred charge accounts. That would take in most of the

men working at the Lincoln. I trusted my customers. I had nothing to worry about, for every payday they lined up to pay their debts. The batchers did not take their change as they did not wish to leave it in the shanty unguarded. So, whatever was left after buying things and paying debts, they wrapped in a rough piece of paper, wrote their names on it, and handed it to me for safe-keeping. I kept their money with my own cash wherever I thought it was safe. There were times when I had as much as three thousand dollars in cash belonging to the miners. I took good care of it. Nobody lost a penny. On Saturday afternoons, just before leaving on the miners' train for a weekend at home, they would line up for their money.

They were mostly mature men, heads of families and active churchgoers, and they behaved accordingly. Though Tremont was within walking distance, the batchers didn't care for its pleasures. They seldom left Lincoln during the week. They hung around their shanties or loafed in the store. Some chipped in for a subscription to the Pottsville *Republican*, which was delivered to them.

They had simple pastimes. When the weather was nice they pitched horseshoes. That was their main outdoors game. They had more fun than a bunch of kittens. They liked to wrestle. Sometimes there was a brawl, but not often. In my time there was only one shooting; it was between two Austrian muckers who had been brought in here. No policemen were necessary, and we had no jail. There was some friendly card playing, but no gambling, as the men carried little or no change in their pockets; they could get anything they wanted on credit at this store.

There was some singing and playing on musical instruments, but nothing of an organized nature. Everyone was on his own. If a man wanted to be by himself and whittle or carve things out of wood, he was left alone.

Of course, they were practical jokers. A lot of their practical jokes they played inside the mine. One that they pulled outside was this: When a man had a good fire going in his shanty stove, one of his butties would climb up on the roof and cover the stovepipe with a burlap bag. This would smoke him out.

They had a funny way of waking each other up in the morning. Some men were so tired they slept right through the six o'clock colliery whistle, which was intended as the first alert. The first man up would throw a rock against the side of a shanty whose occupant showed no sign of being awake. Then another man would heave a rock at another shanty, and so it went until it sounded like cannon shots.

Hanging outside every shanty on a nail was a tin wash basin in which they washed themselves in the morning. Water was a problem here. The company provided a single outside tap, which was supposed to serve all the batchers. It wasn't enough. To help them I had an extra faucet put in the store and they fetched water

from it. They could shower in the colliery wash-and-change bath-house, but some of the men had bought galvanized iron washtubs from a Tremont hardware store and took baths in them whenever they felt like it.

As in every group of men away from home, some of the batchers kept their shanties immaculate, while others neglected to keep them clean and so had problems with insects.⁷

GETTING RID OF BEDBUGS

Years ago, before any coal miners had an automobile or even a horse and buggy, many of them came from quite a distance, walking over the mountain, to work at Lincoln [Colliery]. They batched in their shanties until a week's work was done. On Saturday afternoons they would go home for the week-end and to fetch clean linens and a week's supply of food. And, of course, in the manner of men, their shanties were, perhaps, not kept too clean. It was a common thing to have the shanties full of bedbugs, and the miners had a rather hard time keeping themselves free of these bedbugs. Then one of the chaps came up with a sure-fire way of getting rid of them.

One evening he got out his fiddle and put a torch to the shanty. From the bush where he was sitting, he watched his shanty go up in flames. As the shanty burned, he sang and played the following ditty:

*Wann des net gut fer Wanse iss,
Dann wess ich net, was besser iss.
(If this isn't good for bedbugs
Then I don't know a better remedy.)*

In this way were the bedbugs destroyed.⁸

LOG CABINS

"The first house built in Port Carbon was erected by A[braham] Pott in 1826 when, to use his own language, 'We had a real log-cabin raising.'"⁹

As this reference indicates, the earliest homes in mining towns were built of logs. Generally they were one-and-a-half-story log cabins

with a slanting roof; the shingles, split from the log, were shaved straight and flat on the *Schnitzelbank* with a heavy draw knife. A log house had one or two small rooms on the ground floor with a loft above, reached by a crude ladder, where the children slept. The floor was made of hewn planks and the walls were bare. The lighting was poor as the windows were small. What there was of furniture was homemade. Many of these log houses were built on the edge of a virgin forest still infested with wild animals. It was no novelty to wake up in the morning and find a curious (and, often, hungry) bear prowling around the house.

Another type of pioneer miner's house was built of stone. Stone Row in Branchdale, site of the former Otto Colliery, has withstood the ravages of time better than the log and frame houses built in the same period.¹⁰

Donaldson, named for Judge William Donaldson, was one of the earliest mining settlements in the West End to have freeholding miners. Judge Donaldson, owner of a large tract of coal lands, which he had acquired in 1837, apparently was a liberal man. When asked by miners—Pennsylvania Dutch, English, Irish, and Welsh—to survey a town and offer lots for sale at low prices and on terms that they could afford, he agreed to do so. Some of the miners built their own homes, some had assistance from a carpenter, or from a stonemason who built the cellar walls. That was in 1842 and 1843. A firm of coal operators built a boarding house of stone for its unmarried miners. Later it became a hotel—the Franklin House—that figures in a legend.¹¹ The Franklin House is still standing as a reminder of the lively times, Western style, that made Donaldson one of the most exciting mining towns in the West End.

GOLD MINE GAP— PRE-CIVIL WAR COMPANY HOUSES

Typical of the pre-Civil War company houses in the West End were those at Gold Mine Gap, one of a string of mine patches built on the south side of Sharp Mountain, north of the tracks of the Schuylkill and Susquehanna Railroad. The houses were arranged in double blocks, each having one room on the ground floor and two bedrooms upstairs. Most company houses of the period had built-in

grates for heating and cooking, but the Gold Mine Gap homes were equipped with portable stoves. Furniture—chiefly a bedstead made from square timber, a table, and a few crude benches—was built by the colliery carpenter. Constructed in haste out of the cheapest available timber, these household pieces offered no competition whatever to the folk art then being slowly and painstakingly turned out by Pennsylvania Dutch cabinetmakers. The houses were without inside plumbing or any other amenities. Probably they were not worth more than the four dollar rent charged for them, but to English-speaking immigrants arriving in the West End with nothing more than the clothes on their backs, they were welcome shelters.

Sometimes a British mining family would find no furniture in a house assigned to them. When the miners came up from the coal mine, and after they had had their supper, a raiding party would be formed to get furniture. The turnover was such that a diligent search usually led to a recently-vacated house with furniture belonging to the company. Then Tom Rutledge, Gold Mine Gap's fiddler, would bring his fiddle to the newcomers' house for dancing. This was to make the newcomers feel welcome.¹²

Not only furniture, but also houses were mobile in pre-Civil War mine patches. Mines were opened and closed frequently, and thrifty independent coal operators would move their employees' houses along with the rest of the colliery equipment. The Gold Mine Gap's houses were moved to Lower Rausch Creek, a new mine operation, and so were the houses of its neighboring patches, Mount Eagle and Rausch Gap. Many years later, following another move of these operators, the same houses were seen in Tremont Township.¹³

PINE GROVE

Pine Grove suffered more than any other community in the West End from the sudden collapse of the anthracite industry. Although it lay outside the actual mining belt and, therefore, was free of coal dust, the borough was a mining town in a real sense throughout the nineteenth century and part of the twentieth, according to Bruce L. Christ, retired local businessman and a former high school teacher, who is a descendant of the original settlers of the West End:

Up until 1928 I would have called this a mining community be-

cause most of the money earned, and most of the money that passed through here, came from the anthracite industry. Furthermore, at one time the great majority of the people living here worked in the mines, and among those miners, 99-14/100 percent were Pennsylvania German.

In my youth a miner was earning two and two dollars and-a-half a day at the most, and our boys went to work in the coal breaker (some of them at nine years of age) for two-and-a-half to three dollars a week. There were men here earning \$36 a month who built their own homes, and they were fairly large homes costing approximately \$800 to \$900 each to build them.

In those days a carpenter got fifteen cents an hour for his work, and lumber was cheap and plentiful, and this is why the houses could be built for so little money. Of course, the houses did not have steam heat nor a bathroom. They were without any modern conveniences. There are places in town where you can still see the remains of old wells out of which water was drawn, and there were hand pumps out in the yards where housewives got their water. All the water had to be heated on the kitchen stove, and all the washing was done on washboards.¹⁴

The hand pump continued as a common household appliance in Pine Grove until the 1890's when the present water supply system originated. The water system revolutionized the way of life for most mining families. In the passing years, faucets and hydrants displaced the hand pump, and bathtubs made the old-fashioned tin washbasin, which hung outside from a nail, and the homemade wooden washtub, obsolete.

Ah! The wooden washtub! Mention of it to veteran miners and their wives brings forth tears of nostalgia.

Before the installation of showers at collieries, anthracite miners were obliged to go home in their working clothes, which were dripping wet from perspiration and sulphurous mine water, while their necks, backs, and faces were black with coal dust. It was a real hardship, especially for those who worked at the Lincoln Colliery and lived on a farm in Pine Grove Township or over the line in Lebanon County.

When a miner reached home, he expected to find a big kettle of water being heated on the kitchen range for his bath in the family washtub. The daily ablutions were performed in the kitchen, warmest room in the house. A miner would lock the kitchen door, pull down the blinds, and then proceed to wash his head, face, and whole front of his body. From there his wife took over. Since he could not reach his smudged back, she had the task of scrubbing it for him. Yes, this was a time-honored custom, which was continued in many

homes even after bathtubs were installed. While the miner's wife was thus engaged, there might come a knock on the kitchen door. The response, in a woman's high-pitched voice, was something like, "Just a minute, I'm scrubbing my man's back," or "Just a minute. Mister's taking his bath." The spoken words were in English or in the Dutch dialect.

Many miners' homes had a rain barrel standing in the yard where the water conductor came from the roof. There was a general belief among housewives that rain water was superior to pump water because it was softer and therefore more effective in washing the family's laundry. In the absence of a public water system, the rain barrel also served as a reserve supply in a drought, for watering plants and scrubbing the front porch and steps.

Another reminder of the old days was the "busybody." The reference is not to those trouble-making human beings who spread gossip, but to an ingenious device that once extended from second-floor window ledges. It consisted of three small mirrors so arranged that they would reveal the identity of an unexpected caller knocking on the front door below. If, perchance, the caller was unwelcome either to the family or to an eligible young daughter, the door remained unopened. Alas! No change in human nature, but an improvement in housing design finally doomed the busybody.¹⁵

POSSESSION HOUSES

Soon after President Gowen began his large-scale acquisitions of coal-land tracts, in 1871, possession houses appeared in fairly large numbers throughout Schuylkill County. It was a legal device for nailing down coal lands in dispute ("possession is nine-tenths of the law"). Such disputes were the natural result of the mad scramble for coal land in the seventies and eighties. But Gowen was not the only coal operator who built possession houses. Some of his competitors played the same game.

Quite a few mining families thus enjoyed a windfall in rent-free housing, though the locations were often remote from civilization. In addition to free rent and the privilege of cultivating vegetable gardens on the disputed land, they received a monthly stipend. The amount varied in individual cases.

It was the underground mineral rights that determined the value

of any tract rather than the land surface. Because millions of dollars were involved, litigation often took a long time. Possession-house occupants continued living in them until the land titles were finally cleared.

Several of my informants told me that they had lived in possession houses as children. One ex-miner, who had recorded a ballad for this collection, revealed that he had grown up in one at Keffers in Porter Township.

A seventy-nine-year-old Pennsylvania Dutch miner's widow, who had recorded plantlore and folk remedies, recalled childhood days in a Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company possession house at the summit of Sherman Mountain. The cleared woodland surrounding the house was cultivated as a vegetable garden. Isolated on the edge of a mountain wilderness, the house was a lonely place, she recalled.

Their nearest neighbor lived about five miles away in another possession house. The families could not borrow the proverbial cup of sugar from each other because they were not on speaking terms. You see, the other possession house belonged to another company.

MINERS' TRAILS AND TRAINS

"My daddy for many, many years worked at Branchdale. He walked out in the morning, five miles, and walked home at night. Mom used to want Pop to work up here [Tremont] where he could go on the miners' train, and he wouldn't do it. He'd walk to Branchdale. Walked all his life. He wanted to walk. He used to go for a long walk down here to Black Creek every day after he had stopped working. He walked until the last six months. He was eighty-two years old when he died."*

WHEN THE FIRST PENNSYLVANIA DUTCH FARMERS VENTURED INTO THE anthracite industry, the West End was still a wilderness. The anthracite was embedded in mountain ridges and to reach it they had to blaze their own trails, just as their German forebears had to do.

Those coal mining pioneers thought nothing of walking five miles each way between home and colliery. Farmer-miners living a longer distance from their work—from ten to thirty miles—walked once a week to the colliery where they lived in batching shanties five or six days, and then walked home to spend Sunday with their families.

One of the oldest sources of mine labor in the West End is Oak Grove, a farming settlement in Pine Grove Township whose "people

* Anna Salen, recorded July 31, 1957.

started working in the mines as soon as coal was discovered," to quote Dr. Clyde S. Stine, an authority on local history.¹ Oak Grove owes this distinction largely to geography. It was within relatively easy walking distance over the mountain to Lorberry in Tremont Township where, as early as 1835, Oliver & Stees, coal operators, had a substantial colliery.

I met Dr. Stine in the general store of Paul Fidler, retired miner, who had trod the Hoover Path over the mountain for many years. Sixty-one years old at the time of the interview, Fidler had started his mining career in 1910 when, as a boy of fourteen, he was employed as a door-tender in the Rausch Creek Washery at \$8.40 a week for a ten-hour shift. He was a member of the United Mine Workers of America and proudly wore its button on his cap signifying that he had paid his dues. It was at the Lincoln Colliery, however, that he spent most of his working years.

At two o'clock of a Monday morning he would set out from his home with a basket of food on each arm to brave the terrors of the Hoover Path across the mountain. He carried enough food to last until Saturday when he returned home by the same path.

In both directions the mountain was crossed in darkness, lighted only by the miners' open-flame cap lamps, which burned "fish oil," according to Fidler. In single file, men and boys walked along the path silently, each rapt in his own thoughts—or fears.

From the valley below it was a strange sight. The mineworkers' bodies blended into the mountain blackness, and the bobbing cap lights gave the impression of disembodied spirits floating in mid-air. It was a deeply impressive spectacle, familiar enough to local residents who saw it daily, but eery to a visitor viewing it for the first time. With the mines closed forever, this was one of the traditional sights never again to be seen from West End coal valleys.

Mineworkers, especially breaker boys, walked uneasily along the mountain path, imagining all sorts of evil spirits invisible in the darkness. Three evils they feared most: snakes, catamounts, and ghosts. Onions hidden in their boots warded off snakes, or so they believed. Catamounts themselves feared lights, and miners burned their cap lamps for that reason as well as for light. Men and boys were aware of the presence of catamounts. "You could hear 'em," explained Fidler, "but as long as you had the light, why, they didn't tackle you. But if you would have been in the dark, they would have made you trouble. So everybody lighted up while goin' through

the mountains.”² As for ghosts, they were unpredictable, and for that reason, were feared most, like the ghost that gave the Hoover Path its traditional name.

There were four traditional mountain paths leading from Pine Grove Township over the mountains to Lincoln Colliery—Outwood Path, Beuchler Path, Stine Path, and Hoover Path. Each inspired a distinctive folklore of its own, including how it had acquired its name.

THE HOOVER PATH

SOME PEOPLE SAY they don't believe in ghosts. There are times when it's very difficult not to believe in them.

Now take that man Dave Waldon, who was a boaster. He was huge in size. He lived in Elwood, Pennsylvania. And he was surely the strongest man in town and didn't hesitate to say so. Furthermore, like most men of that type, he also thought he knew more than everybody else. And somehow or other, some of the men about town were quite sure he wasn't as strong nor as wise as he thought he was; but no one cared to put it to the test.

Then one day all this came to light. The men of Elwood worked at Lincoln Colliery, but there were no highways to take them there, nor automobiles either. So they would walk across three mountains on a Monday morning, carrying enough food to last them for the week, and then batch themselves in their small shanty near the mine.

One Monday morning about five o'clock, Dave, and Lef, and Ruve all filled up their baskets and started off over the mountains. It was snowing, a wet snow coming down, and pitch-dark, of course. They lighted their way with the little miners' lamps which they had hung from the front of their caps. The flares made a hissing noise as the snowflakes touched these flames. They were going along over the mountain, along Hoover Path.

Now the Hoover Path got its name in an interesting way. There was a man by the name of Irv Hoover, who was a clerk in Paxon's Store in Pine Grove. He lived with his widowed mother. And one day he failed to come home at lunchtime. His mother didn't worry too much about it, but when he didn't get home by four o'clock in

the afternoon, she thought there must be something wrong. So she went to the store and found that he had left there at eleven o'clock, and no one knew where he was.

So they searched for him but didn't find him. Now what had happened was that Hoover had gone up to Ravine, to the junction; he had stopped there and bought a bag of peanuts and then went into the mountains. He walked out through the valley eastward between two mountains until he came to a large boulder about the size of a freight car. He climbed up on the boulder and sat there and ate his peanuts. When he had eaten his peanuts, he gathered up all the shells that were there, put them back into the bag, and weighted the bag down with a stone. Now he must have been sitting with his legs dangling because later some peanut shells were found at the foot of the big rock. When he had finished eating his peanuts, he took a new piece of clothesline rope, which he had cut from the reel in the store that morning, fastened it to a branch of an oak tree which was hard by, and then carefully fitted the noose, slipped it over his head, and jumped off.

This was right beside the path that the Elwood miners were using day after day to go to the mine. And if any one of them had looked up, they could have seen Hoover dangling there. Several days later when Hoover couldn't be found anywhere, two men from town, John Gensmer and Fred Gutter, bee hunters, were out hunting bees. Now they usually hunted bees by putting some anise oil on some leaves to attract the wild ones, and then followed them, watched as they moved away, and went to the tree and found the honey. While they were out bee hunting, Fred noticed some buzzards circling in the sky. He turned to John and he says, "There's our man Hoover." So they went in the direction of the circling buzzard and, sure enough, there they found him hanging on the oak limb, right beside the path which the Elwood miners used to go to Lincoln.

So this is how the path was named the Hoover Path. But from then on, no Elwood miner would ever think of traveling that path alone at night, and a few of them wouldn't travel it in the daytime except in groups, because, of course, they could forever see Hoover hanging from that branch.

On this particular morning when it was snowing, and Dave, and Lef, and Ruve were traveling along here, they couldn't help but think of Hoover who had hung there, and they must pass that place. Dave, the big man, was in the lead breaking tracks for the two that followed.

And suddenly Dave gave a tremendous roar, "Hoover's got me! Hoover's got me!" and fell into the snow. Well, the lights were all blown out at that point and there was a sort of flurrying of wings. What to do now? Evidently Hoover's ghost was around. This was frightening to all of them because there was just no telling if this was a ghost or not. So they fumbled for their matchboxes and found matches, and Ruve and Lef both lighted their lamps once more. And here was Dave, lying in the snow, still calling and moaning. Pies, and cakes, and sandwiches—his provisions—were scattered all around. But there was no sign of the ghost. They helped Dave to his feet, and his face was swelling badly. But otherwise he wasn't hurt. They must get out of here. This ghost wasn't visible but he still would be here. So Lef and Ruve supported the moaning Dave in between them. They went on into the darkness.

Now the gray mist of dawn was just spreading itself over the top of the Broad Mountain as they reached the colliery. And the air was electric as they led Dave, now nearly blinded by the swelling, into the shifting room where the men were collected. Now Hoover's ghost was with them, permeating the whole room. This was the closest any of them had ever come to a real ghost and it wasn't comfortable. The coming of the company doctor relieved the tension. He wasn't scared. He examined Dave's face and merely grunted. Then he started to undo the muffler Dave wore about his neck, the ends tucked into the coat. But he stopped suddenly. He stepped back, looking at his hand which came away. It was full of feathers. Other feathers now were falling on the floor and he didn't know what to make of it. And he stared long and hard while the men crowded around him, all looking at the feathers. They looked at the doctor, then at the feathers. Brown feathers they were, speckled. Hoover's ghost with brown feathers! That didn't make sense.

Then suddenly, as if by a signal, everybody laughed. They slapped each other, and they shook each other, in their excitement, of course. They held their sides laughing and couldn't stop. A poor, frightened little grouse had finally whittled big boasting Dave down to size. So these men, all hunters, now realized what had happened to him. One of Dave's big feet had stepped on the grouse hidden in the snow. As it exploded into his face, a strong wind hit him a sharp blow. That laid Hoover's ghost. From then on the miners walked the path freely and without fear.

Dave? Oh, he left for the West. He didn't bother about working there any longer.³

MINERS' TRAINS

Miners' trains started as an experiment in free transportation for employees. Soon after its purchase of the Brookside Colliery near Tower City in the early seventies, the Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company began expanding its operation. This created new jobs. Men and boys living within reasonable walking distance of the Brookside were given an opportunity to apply for employment, but not enough of them came forward. This led the Company to conclude that the area was lacking in adequate manpower.

So the call for help went to Tremont, a flourishing town of mixed population some ten miles distant, where many experienced miners lived. But at the prevailing rate of wages—\$2 to \$3.50 a week for breaker boys, and \$9 to \$12 a week for skilled miners—the Tremonters said they could not afford the cost of transportation, an estimated thirty-five cents a day for a return trip by rail.

The Brookside management saw the point and arranged with the parent company, the Reading Railroad, to carry the Tremonters free of charge between the town and the mine. This produced the desired effect. The Company obtained all the labor it needed for Brookside.

The free-ticket privilege, however, created a situation not anticipated by the Company. Each day at quitting time, workers entitled to railroad transportation applied at the colliery office for two train tickets, one for getting home that evening, and the other for coming to work the next morning. These tickets were not acceptable on regular passenger trains. They were good only on so-called "miners' accommodation" trains, but any holder, whether he was an employee or not, was entitled to ride on them.

Some miners were quick to take advantage of this loophole to their profit. While waiting for the miners' train to pick them up and transport them home, they would hop a ride, despite the danger, on any freight train that happened to be passing by at the time. The motive was to save the free ticket, which was bootlegged for a dime or so to traveling salesmen.

It was not long, however, before the Company and the railroad learned of the abuse, and the free-ticket privilege was discontinued. The miners were made to pay for their transportation.

Traveling salesmen were as unhappy about this change in Company policy as the workers themselves. While the free-ticket privilege

was still in effect, the Brookside miners' train, on its way from Tremont to Brookside to pick up miners and return them home, had an accident. Two cars of the train jumped the tracks, breaking away from the other cars and rolling down the mountainside near Keffer's Station. None of the passengers were hurt but they suffered from shock. The first to regain composure was a traveling salesman riding on one of those bootlegged tickets, who remarked, "Now ain't this a hell of a way to treat a regular customer."⁴

After its acquisition of the West End collieries, in the seventies, the Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company embarked on a program of expansion. This created a new demand for workers, whom the Company found on the tidy and abundant Pennsylvania Dutch farms in Pine Grove Township. However, the farmers were reluctant to apply for mining jobs without two major concessions: the right to continue living on their farms and not be herded into mine patches around collieries; and railroad transportation at less than regular passenger railroad fare. Upon learning of these conditions, the Company readily agreed to them, and without negotiation.

Two miners' trains were placed in service to transport the workers between Pine Grove and the various collieries in the mountains to the north. The Lincoln miners' train carried workers to Lower Rausch Creek, Lorberry, Lincoln, and Kalmia Collieries.⁵ The Brookside miners' train went to Tremont where the men and boys transferred to a waiting train that, after picking up others at Tremont, Donaldson, and Keffers, carried the passengers to Rausch Creek Colliery (sometimes known as East Franklin Colliery), and to Good Spring, East Brookside, and Brookside Collieries.⁶

Within several years after the settlement of the big 1902 strike, there was a second major invasion of the anthracite mines of the West End by Pennsylvania Dutch farmers. When the coal operators had signed a contract with the United Mine Workers of America a new era began, with the prospect of higher wages, more satisfactory working conditions, and a better standard of living. The thrifty Dutch were not going to pass up an opportunity like that.

This time the Company tapped a fresh source of labor—the agricultural townships of Lebanon County, adjacent to Schuylkill. The people there had the same character traits as those in Pine Grove Township, and were just as desirable as mineworkers. The Company had the Reading Railroad run the special train all the way into the borough of Lebanon. From the town of Pine Grove there were stops at Exmore, Irving, and Suedberg, at the Schuylkill County boundary

line. Next, in Lebanon County, there were Sam's Siding, Green Point, Inwood, Lickdale, and others, terminating in Lebanon Borough.

The Lincoln miners' train of this later period, consisting of seven cars, was made up in the Pine Grove railroad yards. About 5:30 each working day, a locomotive and two cars brought in the mine-workers from Lebanon County; an engine and car collected men and boys at Outwood from the northwestern part of Pine Grove Township; and another engine and car fetched a contingent from Rock, a village in neighboring Washington Township. The remaining three cars were reserved for Pine Grove Borough residents.

The seven-car miners' train now started out for the Lincoln Colliery. It stopped first at North Pine Grove Crossing, then at what was known as the North Pine Grove Station, and finally at the junction. A second locomotive was now joined to the other to pull the heavy load up the steep mountain grade to Lincoln Colliery.

The fare was quite reasonable. There were eleven commutation tickets in a pack for one dollar. The distance from which a miner came determined the number of tickets he received for a dollar. For example, if a man rode only as far as Pine Grove, he received all eleven tickets for his dollar; but if his station was Lickdale in Lebanon County, he got only six tickets for a dollar. Tickets were purchased at a window in the colliery office. No cash was involved. The dollar was charged to the purchaser's account, and it was deducted from his take-home pay at the end of the pay period.

Workers sometimes reached the point where they thought the cost of transportation made working in the mine somewhat of a gamble. A man from Pine Grove paid eighteen cents a day to ride on the miners' train, and the man from Suedberg, about twenty-five cents a day. At a time when a miner earned only \$1.75 a day, and had other things deducted from that, there was not much left to carry home.

The story is told of one miner who came home to his wife and threw his pay envelope on the table with disgust. After the deductions had been made at the colliery, all he had to show for two weeks of hard labor was a net of \$1.60.

"Sal, this ain't going to pay the grocer," said the miner.

"No."

"And it won't even pay the baker, will it?"

"No."

"Well, what do you say we buy a case of beer?"

The seven cars of the Lincoln miners' train were wooden and dilapidated. The velvet seats, which had accommodated sixty pas-

sengers, had been removed. They were replaced with four pine benches the length of the car—two along the side walls (at the windows) and two without backs in the middle of the car. Up to 125 men and boys were packed into each car without too much discomfort. Thus the Lincoln miners' train carried approximately seven hundred mineworkers, a majority of the colliery's employees.

The air was thick with tobacco smoke from clay and corncob pipes that used the cheapest tobacco on the market. Many of those not smoking, chewed; and in the absence of cuspidors, they frequently took aim at the floor, splotching it with the brown juice. In addition, they littered the floor with peanut shells. No wonder at the end of a day's run the cars received a thorough cleansing with caustic soda.

Yet veteran miners look back at these miners' trains with the warmest nostalgia. Regardless of the filth and discomforts, they had fun. The cars rang out with uninhibited laughter and ribald humor. There was boasting of one another's prowess in the mine and on the farm, and of one another's progress in affairs of the heart. There seems to have been no singing on the miners' train, but if one had a recording machine in the right place and at the right time, he might have taped many an anecdote, legend, or tall tale.

Only the Dutch dialect was heard on the Lincoln between Lebanon and Tremont. English was spoken by Irish and Welsh miners who got on at Tremont.

The mineworkers seemed in a terrible hurry to get away when the train stopped at the Lincoln Colliery and at the Pine Grove station upon their return home. "Why do you guys always run from the train?" Mary Sherk, Pine Grove agent, once asked. "Why, to get there," was the noncommittal reply.

There were no reservations on the miners' train, yet each man always sat in the same seat, and woe betide him who occupied a seat belonging to someone else.

Riders having the most fun usually were the breaker boys who traveled at half price. They gave full vent to their animal instincts, wrestling and fighting and running up and down the car making crackling sounds as they stepped over the peanut shells. They also liked to play tricks on their elders. Passengers who dozed off were especially vulnerable to their pranks, one of which was to switch dinner kettles, with dire results if an Irishman got a Dutchman's meat sandwiches on Friday.

The train conductor was often a target. Some of the boys, lacking

a commutation ticket, might hide under a bench behind the legs of their elders where the astigmatic eyes of a conductor could not see them.

MISTAKEN IDENTITY

THE CARS OF miners' trains were lighted by kerosene lamps hanging from the ceiling. One day a young feller climbed up to the roof of the toilet in a corner of the car, and spit down on the floor under one of the lamps. When the conductor came into the car and saw the wet mark on the floor he looks up at the lamp, and he gets his chalk out and he writes: "Leaky lamp; have repaired."⁸

THE LONG AND SHORT OF IT

THE CONDUCTOR of one of the miners' trains was a little short feller. When it was time to pull the cord to start the train, he'd get up on one of the benches to reach it.

Slate pickers and other boy workers used to ride at half-fare. One in particular, named Mike, had been doing it for several years, and the conductor thought the time had come when the boy should start riding on a man's ticket. So one morning he put it up to him, saying: "Mike, isn't it about time you're gettin' a full-price ticket? When are you gettin' one?"

"Well, I'll tell you now," replied the breaker boy. "When you can reach that cord without jumping up for it, I'll get a full-price ticket."⁹

COAL, MUSH, AND ALCOHOL DON'T MIX

MOST OF THE MINERS in our area were not really drinking men, but to be sociable they'd take a drink or two. As usually happened, somebody got a little too much before going home.

This was the case with Amos, one of our miners. When he got

home a little tight, he couldn't see his way around. It was his habit to bank the fire in the kitchen stove before going to bed; you have to do this with anthracite . . . to keep the fire going until morning. So Amos got the coal bucket, took off the stove lids, and poured.

But next morning, when his wife came down into the kitchen, she discovered that Amos hadn't poured the coal into the fire, but had emptied the bucket into a large kettle of mush that was cooking at the back of the stove.

Within a day everybody that rode with him on the miners' train had heard about it, and they teased the life out of him.¹⁰



FOLK SPEECH— THE DUTCH DIALECT

PROBABLY NO ETHNIC GROUP IS MORE AMERICAN THAN THE PENNSYLVANIA Dutch. In their veins courses the blood of many elements of the American population with whom they and their forebears have intermarried since colonial times.

Their loyalty to the American ideal and their patriotism in times of national crises have never been brought into question.

On June 3, 1870, Professor S. S. Haldeman read a paper before the Philological Society of London in which he held that the term *Vaterland* no longer had a place among the Pennsylvania Germans "the natives caring no more for Germany than for other parts of Europe, for they are completely naturalized, notwithstanding their language."¹

Citing this reference approvingly, Arthur D. Graeff, Pennsylvania Dutch scholar and author, had this to say:

In my extensive acquaintance among Pennsylvania Germans who have shown an interest in their cultural heritage, I do not know one person who thinks in terms of any *Vaterland* other than the America where his ancestors sought refuge from the intolerable conditions of the old world, that America which he and his forebears have helped to make great and glorious.

But *die Mutterschproch*, or his mother tongue, that is a different matter. We still use the term affectionately, not in the sense that [it] is related to a mother country, but rather in the sense that it

is the language which many of us have learned upon our mother's knee—the earliest vehicle for our thinking, the medium by which our deepest emotions are touched, and the language in which nature speaks to us. Our adopted English comes out of books. English is, so to speak, the Sunday-go-to-meeting clothing for our tongue.

A complex modern civilization has made necessary the introduction of many new words into our dialect. Do we consult a German dictionary to find modern German words for our needs? No, we have recourse to a typically American way. We coin our own words, drawing liberally upon the English. Thus a railway becomes a *Riggelweg*; a microphone becomes a *Schwetz Box*. As early as the middle of the eighteenth century Conrad Weiser recorded that he and Count von Zinzendorf had talked *Pennsylvanish*. Our dialect is not Dutch, it is not German, it is *Pennsylvanish*!²

The percentage of English loan words used by those who speak Pennsylvania Dutch is much higher than it was a half century ago, but not as high as some people believe. Albert F. Buffington and Preston A. Barba, coauthors of *A Pennsylvania German Grammar*, say that the percentage "varies from two to eight percent, depending upon the particular dialect area, the subject of the conversation or discussion, and the age of the speaker."³

In the their introduction, the coauthors throw further light on the Dutch dialect:

The earliest German immigrants belonged largely to the religious sects, *i.e.*, Mennonites, Amish, Dunkards, Schwenckfelder, and Moravians. The years between 1727 and the American Revolution brought the "church" people (Lutherans and Reformed). It has been estimated that today there are between eight and ten million people who can trace their ancestry to the 100,000 or more early German and Swiss settlers who came to Pennsylvania before the Revolutionary War.

When these German immigrants settled in Pennsylvania, they used for everyday discourse the dialects which were peculiar to the sections whence they came. However, these dialects passed through a leveling and blending process and developed into what is today a fairly homogeneous dialect. This German dialect, popularly referred to as "Pennsylvania Dutch," is spoken by more than 300,000 people in various sections of Pennsylvania; also in Rowan and Cabarrus counties in North Carolina, in the Shenandoah Valley in Virginia, in parts of Delaware (Dover), on the upper reaches of the Potomac in West Virginia, in Western Maryland, in several of the states in the Middle West, and in Perth and Waterloo counties, Ontario, Canada.⁴

The Dutch dialect has lasted as long as it has because those who

speak it have molded it into a medium through which they can express shades of thought and feeling for which English seems inadequate to them. Pennsylvania Dutch folk culture—songs and ballads, folk tales, legends, customs, superstitions, and beliefs—is cradled in the dialect.

When Pennsylvania Dutch farmers moved into the anthracite mining region they carried their dialect with them. In most homes it continued to be the only tongue spoken among parents and children alike. School boards, principals, and teachers in the West End made a determined effort to teach English to their pupils, but the home influence hampered their efforts. Some professional men and women among my informants said that they did not know a word of English until after they had been enrolled in a public school, and even then they persisted in talking Dutch outside the classrooms.

A veterinarian, who used to look after mine mules until the industry shut down, said:

The only English I heard [at home] was when somebody came that could talk nothing but English. The rest of the time we talked nothing but Pennsylvania Dutch and German at home. And when I started school I just didn't know any English. We [children] didn't understand each other. When we were on the playground, we played and talked in Pennsylvania German until my uncle, who was the teacher, ruled that there'd be no talking Dutch on the playground. And then we had to learn English so we could play. That's all there was to it.

I think it was Livingston Seltzer, then Schuylkill County Superintendent of Schools, who put Pennsylvania Dutch out of business, and he was Dutch himself. When he visited a school playground and heard the children talking in Pennsylvania Dutch he'd jack up the teachers. It was "English or else!" And that was that.⁵

A retired school teacher recollected her experiences early in the present century:

Some of the children couldn't talk English, but, of course, I went out on the playground with them and they had to talk English. That's what the school board wanted me to do. You see, some of the teachers only got twenty-seven dollars a month for doing the same kind of work I did. But the school board gave me thirty-five right away because I couldn't talk Dutch, and they didn't want me to learn to talk Dutch. They said that if I would go out and mix around with the children, they would learn English from me.⁶

A former educator recalled having in one of his high school classes

a student who had arrived with an extremely limited knowledge of English, after passing through eight grades of a rural school. "One day I asked this boy," said my informant, "to give me his idea of the Senate and how it was formed; I wanted to see how far he had gone. Rising to his feet, he got out a sentence or two in English and then quickly fell back into Pennsylvania Dutch. 'Damn it, I can tell you in Dutch, but can't tell you in English,' he said."⁷

No matter how much English they were exposed to in the classroom, children would lapse into Dutch during the long summer vacation. It was inevitable that they should do so because they heard nothing but the dialect in the home and in the community or neighborhood where they lived. Boys who left school at the tender age of ten or eleven to work in the coal breaker soon lost whatever English they had been taught. One elderly mineworker, who became a breaker boy at eleven, told me that he could not speak English until he was fourteen. In the coal breakers, on the miners' trains, and down in the gangways of such collieries as Lincoln, Brookside, East Brookside, Good Spring, and Rausch Creek, only Dutch was spoken by the mineworkers.

Emory Artz, who was a mine foreman in the Lincoln Colliery at the time of its closing in 1930, revealed that he was often pressed into emergency service as an interpreter between Irish and Welsh bosses and their employees. "We had some Pennsylvania Dutchmen at the Lincoln who couldn't talk English," said Mr. Artz. "They'd understand it, but their answers I'd have to give back to the boss. He was an Irishman who didn't understand Dutch. So I went around with him to interpret. He'd ask questions and they'd answer him in Dutch."⁸

These seemingly inarticulate miners were not immigrants. They were sixth or seventh generation Americans whose forebears had fought in the American Revolution.

ACCENTS, IDIOMS, AND DUTCHISMS

The Dutch dialect is disappearing from the West End where it was once universally spoken. This is true even of the Hegins Valley with its nearly one hundred per cent Pennsylvania Dutch population. Lee E. Schroepe, authority on local history and folklore, told me

that most of the children know the dialect "but a good many don't speak it any more. It's gradually dying out, I think. The old people don't speak it any more like they used to."⁹ Although English is winning over Dutch as the universal tongue in this part of Schuylkill County, vestiges of the Dutch accent remain.

Regarding the Dutch accent, one of my informants said: "You find it in my speech and in the speech of everyone who speaks Pennsylvania Dutch. Take the letter *v* as in *vesper*, for instance. It's pronounced as a *w*. We can't say *v*; we say *w*. Talk about that garment called a vest that you used to wear under your coat. Everybody around here calls it a *west*.

"My wife can't speak Pennsylvania Dutch. I can, of course. But we never spoke it at home. Yet our daughter, who graduated from the same college I did, has a decided Pennsylvania German accent, a very decided accent which has come to her from her associations in the town. And she'll never lose it, absolutely never lose it.

"Early in my career I traveled in Canada and in the New England states. I don't remember how many times people there said to me, 'You're Pennsylvania German, aren't you?' They could detect it right away. And so you carry it with you. You can't get rid of it."¹⁰

While quite a respectable German dialect, with a dignity all its own, Dutch nevertheless contains many pitfalls for the average Pennsylvania German who tries to translate its idioms into conversational English. What comes out of this effort is something that might be described as mock Dutch-English, with expressions identified as Dutchisms. Secure in his American lineage and heritage, the Pennsylvania Dutchman laughs with "Englischers" over his own malapropisms.

It is only fair to point out that malapropisms are not confined to the Pennsylvania Dutch, but that they are also found among other bilingual groups in the United States. To speak poor English is no more characteristic of the Pennsylvania Dutch than it is of other segments of the American population. In each ethnic group there is a small minority that translates native idioms into English with laugh-provoking results. In the case of the Pennsylvania Dutch, malapropisms inevitably result from differences in sentence structure, especially in the position of the verb, between the English and German languages.

Hotels, restaurants, gift shops, and other places catering to the tourist trade frequently display Dutchisms, though the proprietors

themselves may speak a perfect English. The anonymous writer of the "Topics" column on the editorial page of the *New York Times* seems to have been impressed by the hospitality and the mock Dutch-English that he encountered on a visit to the Pennsylvania Dutch country, as told in the issue of October 9, 1959. He found that restaurants announce their eating hours this way: "Breakfast time starts once at 7 a.m. and ends now at 11 a.m." A menu informs the guest that "It makes fish Friday." Entrees are described as "Soups 'n' such to start off with once."

Mrs. Arthur Kline of Pine Grove recalled these Dutchisms:

In Hershey Park I was seated on a bench just back of two little Amish girls. I judged they were Amish by their plain dress; they might have belonged to another of the plain sects. And the one girl said to the other: "Ver are you from?" And the second girl said, "Vy, I'm from Lititz, six miles back up over against Manheim."

A storm was brewing that day, and the one old farmer said to the other, "I think we better scratch ourselves in; it gives rain."

We used to have a hotel owner here in town who would say consistently, "Stella, throw me from the steps my shirt down." Now there are some who may discredit it, but I know it's true because I heard it.¹¹

Just as the Pennsylvania Dutch dialect has many English loan words, so the English spoken in the Swatara country is flavored with some anglicized Dutch terms. If you were to ask a neighborhood storekeeper to put your purchase into a poke he might not know what you meant. But should you request him to put the same purchase into a "tut" he probably would understand immediately. "Tut" is the anglicized form of the Dutch dialect term *Dutt* (paper bag). A child would enter a candy store and say, "I want a penny's worse of tiss and a penny's worse of tat, and put it in a tut-bag." If you ordered two "stenners" of ice cream for a party, the same dealer would know exactly how much you wanted, the word being derived from the dialect *Schtenner*, meaning the wooden buckets in which the cans of ice cream were frozen. This was, of course, long before the day of paper bags and ice cream cartons.

At a public dinner where everybody spoke English and many understood Dutch, one of the guests said, "Hand me the *leffe* and I'll *shep* me some *bree* ("Hand me the spoon and I'll help myself to the dressing.") This caused an uproar among table companions who knew that *shep* meant a shovel, and *bree* could be applied to any liquid whether found on the dinner table or in the barnyard.¹²

Many an old-time Pennsylvania Dutchman had his labial troubles, as illustrated by the following anecdote about a village preacher in the Perkiomen Valley during the last century. After delivering his long sermon, he would lean over the pulpit, close his eyes, raise both hands and say, "Let us bray."¹³

The sub-vocal *th* has been especially bothersome. About 1936, at Bucknell University, Lewisburg, the late Elsie Singmaster, Pennsylvania Dutch author, related the following incident: In the days when trolley cars ran between Allentown and South Bethlehem, the Seventeenth and Hamilton Streets crossing marked the end of the line in Allentown. One day, a few moments after the nearby Allentown High School had dismissed its students, one of these trolley cars was quickly filled up with happy, laughing, and chattering teenagers. Hearing the noise upon entering the car, Miss Singmaster turned to a woman companion and exclaimed, "What bedlam!" The conductor promptly put her straight. "No m'a'm, zis car don't go to Bes'lem. It goes to Souse Bes'lem."¹⁴

Schuylkill County court criers are careful in their enunciation when they declare court open with "God save the Commonwealth and this honorable Court." A slight pause between "this" and "honorable" saves them from possible contempt of court risked by criers of another generation. No matter how innocent the latter's intent, it would always come out sounding like this: "God save the Commonwealth an' dishonorable court."¹⁵

Incidentally, there was a time in the history of Pennsylvania Dutchland courts when some trials were conducted in the dialect; judge, jury, and court officials understanding the witnesses perfectly. "In 1904, during the most famous murder trial ever held in this [Lehigh] county," recollected the Allentown *Morning Call*, "all the leading witnesses spoke in Pennsylvania Dutch exclusively. Judge Trexler and jury had no language difficulties whatsoever."¹⁶

John B. Bowman relates the following story by way of illustrating various uses of the Dutch word, *Nochemol* (for *Noch ein Mahl*), meaning "another time," or "once more":

While we were sitting watching a cobbler pegging away, using the old-time wooden pegs, one of the boys handed him a small, very ripe peach. Not wishing to miss more strokes than necessary with his hammer, the shoemaker stuffed the whole peach into his mouth. In crushing it, the pit or stone, shot into his throat and stuck

there. He choked and coughed, wheezed and squeezed [until] we thought he was going to die. He had yelled, "Hit on me!" So we pounded with all our might on his back. Finally, the stone shot out upon the floor. The first thing he said when he came to, was "Goddamn, ditto; *Nochemol* Goddamn; the same and another time!"¹⁷

Harry C. Jennings, retired Reading Railroad locomotive engineer, who handled many coal cars, recalled this incident:

One time I ran an excursion from Lykens to—it was to go to Willow Grove down at Philadelphia. Well, I had a lot of cars, maybe a dozen. And I was only to go to Schuylkill Haven, and then the main line train would take it off of me, but they'd gone. So I was ordered to go to Reading. Well, I struck off for Reading, but got an order to stop at Hamburg where a passenger had been left behind. I should have whistled my flag out, which I didn't do. Before I started, I should have called him, which I didn't do, and I went off and left him. He was a Dutchman named Stahl. The next time he saw me he said, "You played a dandy on me. You went off and there was I *strangled* in Hamburg."¹⁸

During World War I, a shortage of anthracite developed and the Lorberry Washery in Tremont Township was put to work recovering coal from the Lincoln [Colliery] dirt banks. In keeping with custom, a flag-raising ceremony had been arranged at the washery, and the program was opened appropriately with "The Star-Spangled Banner," accompanied by the Ravine Band. After the first verse came an embarrassing silence. Nobody remembered the words of the second verse. So the master of ceremonies said: "Py Cheezus, poys, ve gotta sing somesing!" Somebody suggested that instead of the national anthem they sing the "Old Gray Mare," which everybody knew. The suggestion was adopted, and on that patriotic note production in the Lorberry Washery was started.¹⁹

Complicating linguistics in Schuylkill County involved an intermingling of the Pennsylvania Dutch dialect with the Irish idiom. The heaviest concentration of Irish was in the area north of Pottsville starting at St. Clair, while the Pennsylvania Dutch were most numerous in the West End, beginning a few miles south and west of Pottsville. But there were also Irish in the West End and Dutch within the Irish belt.

Obscurities in both idioms often led to mutual misunderstanding. Confusing to the Dutch were the Irish vernacular "do be's," such as:

"I just do be goin' for a wee drop o' toddy." Another common Irish expression was "Don't be always giving out," meaning "Don't scold or lecture me." Another was the redundant use of prepositions in a single sentence, such as, "Come on in out of the rain." Then there was the frequent use of preposition and participle as in, "after doing," "after getting" ("she's afther gettin' 'erself a new dress"), or "after being," and the common use of the word "lad" or "laddie-buck" for boy or fellow; and "himself," as in "Himself is a fine fellow." Among the older generation of Irish miner folk, especially in the Heckscherville Valley, a wife usually refers to her husband as "himself."

And don't be surprised to find Pennsylvania Dutchmen speaking this Irish vernacular, brogue and all. This is often true among those who were taught for several years by Irish teachers; or who had an Irish mother or father; or who were raised in an Irish mine patch. Branchdale, a village on Route 209 between Pottsville and the West End, is considered outside the Pennsylvania Dutch belt. There an elderly Pennsylvania Dutch mineworker whose early upbringing was on a Dutch farm, said, "You wouldn't believe how hard it is for me to talk Dutch anymore. I've gotten away from it for years now. You can understand all, but you can't talk it."²⁰

FOLK SPEECH FROM MEMORY

Edith Patterson is Pottsville's most distinguished citizen. Widely-read and perceptive, she is her city's fount of knowledge and wisdom. For forty-six years she was a librarian in eastern Pennsylvania, first in Bloomsburg, Columbia County, and later in Pottsville.

She took charge of the Pottsville Free Public Library in 1918 before it moved into a new building, and remained as librarian until her retirement in 1950. A native of Virginia, she grew up in Mansfield, Ohio. Her age? That is known only unto God, Miss Patterson, and myself. In thought and action, however, she is much younger than her chronological age.

Fortunately, she has always taken a lively interest in folklore, particularly the indigenous folklore of Schuylkill County. She is counselor and catalyst to folklorists, historians, and novelists, and is chiefly responsible for my becoming a folklorist.²¹

In the 1930's she rescued from the library's wastepaper baskets carbon copies of folklore material discarded by the WPA writers who had collected it as part of their Schuylkill County project; it is now part of the library's manuscript collections. The originals have not been located.

With her encouragement, the late John B. Bowman, an aging gentleman, laboriously wrote down his recollections of the Schuylkill Canal and canallers, and they are preserved in a two-volume manuscript in the Pottsville Free Public Library.

During her long residence in Pottsville and frequent visits to all parts of the county, including the West End, Miss Patterson heard much folklore, which her marvelous memory has retained. In the thirty-five years of our acquaintance I have always come away from a visit with her with interesting bits of information. It was not until the evening of September 21, 1957, however, that she would consent to have her words recorded for posterity. Innate modesty.

On that memorable occasion when she allowed me to bring my recording machine into her living room, she was in rare good form. She was hardly conscious of the tape spinning around its reel.

What follows represents only part of her recording of that evening; that part in which she remembers the Dutch idiom and anecdotes illustrating the idiom, heard over a period of some forty years:

Before we start I want to say about the Pennsylvania Dutch that they're just the people who didn't come to town . . . equivalents of the people who came from the hills, or from sequestered valleys in every part of the United States. It just happens that here in eastern Pennsylvania, here in Schuylkill County at least, we have more hills and valleys than anybody else.

The Pennsylvania Dutchman was an example to his neighbors because he lived true to his old proverb: "Let every man sweep before his own door." He was self-respecting. He kept beautiful care of his town by taking good care of his own property. They used to say that down in Pine Grove people not only scrubbed the weather boarding on their porches but the whole front of the houses, and that they also would sweep into the middle of the street, then go back, sit down in a rocking chair, and hate themselves because they didn't have anything else to clean.

And now about their folk speech.

Of course, everybody that finds you come from eastern Pennsylvania says, "Then it makes a little red one on the end and it's all, ain't?" That's a version of the caboose story that has been going on for at least seventy years.

And then there's another story that has just such wide acceptance.

It came in with the electric doorbell—and that's the sign maiden sisters had on their door, "Button don't bell—bump!" In one of our neighboring towns you hear all sorts of versions of that one. But there is one variant that really happened here in one of our towns that hitches onto Pottsville. And this was the sign on the door: "*Hock on the dore. The bell's bruk.*" That was probably about forty years ago, and I got it firsthand.

Then there are some that seem to me, perhaps, a bit manufactured, and some of them are sacred with age. I was told this [next] one forty years ago by an old gentleman who remembered it from his youth:

A schoolmaster had a tardy scholar, who just wouldn't come on time, and wouldn't come on time. Finally, for some strange reason, which the master didn't know, the boy began to come on time. Finally, after waiting several days and seeing that it continued, the schoolmaster said in amazement: "Chonny, Chonny, vat makes you come so soon of late? You used to be behind before, but now you're first at last."

Another one that has gone the rounds so long and is so neatly made that you wonder maybe that that was made up too. I don't know, but it's told as gospel truth in Schuylkill County. That was the story of the little boy who had some trouble with pronouncing a word in a church description and he said to his teacher, "A-i-s-l-e, teacher, how you say that?" And the teacher said, "Ach, *Esel udder Isel*, bose iss right." And since *Esel* is a jackass, perhaps I'm quite sure the teacher was right.

I have another teacher-pupil anecdote. Mrs. Householder, a teacher, was trying to teach one of her boy pupils the word "walk." To demonstrate dramatically when he couldn't understand what walking was at all, she pulled up her skirt about four inches (skirts went to the floor in those days), and the pupil looked at her as she w-a-l-k-e-d- across the floor, and a sudden smile broke over his face as he comprehended. "Ach, lecks!" he said, and her legs did show—four inches of them.

The next story is about a friend's maid who had a little cousin who was retarded and not equal to the troubles of this world. So when the maid came home, my friend said, "Mary, there was a telephone message for you. I'm sorry it's bad news. Little Jakie is dead." And with the forthrightness of a Pennsylvania German woman used to looking facts in the face, she said, "Ach, yes. But Jakie was off und he could never get on. He is better off as he iss, as he iss, as he vass, as he vass."

These stories are told on the Pennsylvania Germans, and I've even heard people say that the stories were always told *on* them. I take exception to that, and I think anyone who knows them well, will. They had their own sense of humor. I know. I was going down one of our town [Pottsville] streets one day, and the farmer had just drawn up to the curb. The first thing you ask of my

farmer ("my farmer," we say, instead of hucksters), is what he has today. Of course, it's a common saying, "I get my meat off my farmer," which literally we don't. This morning somebody put to him the usual question, "What have you today?" and I heard this low Pennsylvania Dutch voice at my elbow say, "Vell, I got a flat tire, for one thing!"

And then there was another man who used to come to Pottsville. It was long before my day, but told me by an old lady. He was quite a joker. When he came to her house and she asked him that question, "What have you today?" He'd say, "Hens und hens' husbands, goblins und hobgoblins, inside sinks und outside sinks."

Now hens' and hens' husbands, and goblins and hobgoblins—you have no trouble with those, have you? Well, the inside things and outside things, I'm not clear about myself. They may be things from the house and things from the garden. Some people think it meant things that grew underground and things that grew on the surface. You have your choice.

The Pennsylvania Dutchman has a very great aptitude for manual work and is resourceful in dealing with many problems. Sometimes (as in the story I'm going to tell you, which came to me from a Pine Grove lawyer), they cropped horses' tails back in the 1880's. That was all very well for style and for the lady riders, but not for the farmers in the back country who wanted a whole horse. And this old Pennsylvania Dutchman in southern Schuylkill County had such a horse to trade. To add to its value, he manufactured an artificial tail by inserting separate hairs into the mutilated tail. When the tail disintegrated and the case came up in court, the Judge turned to him and said, "Will you confess that you did this?" And pride of workmanship got ahead of caution, and he hitched up to the judge and confidentially said, "Yes, Judge, I done it, and I *done* it real inchenious."

I have found that certain local things suffered a change by the time they got out to the Middle West, and one of them was the names of eastern Pennsylvania families.

We had, in Mansfield [Ohio], the Noggles. Our Nagles are an old and prominent Pennsylvania German family around the Berks and Schuylkill region, and they spell it, N-a-g-l-e. But out in Ohio, the other family that kept the spelling became Nagle [with a long *a*]. And there was still another branch of the family in Mansfield who wanted to hold their name as Nagle (pronounced Noggle). So to keep that name they had to spell it N-o-g-g-l-e. There was still another family that spelled its name translated into English—N-a-i-l. So we had Nagles, and we had Noggles, and we had Nails. And the big son was nicknamed "Spike" Nail; and his little brother, "Tack" Nail. Down in Reading there is a single little grave plot that has Langes, Langs, and Longs, and they're all one family and buried in one plot. So you see that things did suffer changes in pronunciation. One family, the "Newswenders,"

were "Newswangers" south of Pottsville and "Nicewinters" when they went north into Columbia County.

I see all these little so-called gift shop trinkets and one of the Pennsylvania Dutchisms on it, and on many of them is "Outen the light." Well, now, "outen the light," if you look at your old *Century* dictionary, you will find "outen the light" is not Pennsylvania Dutch at all, but it's old English.

And there is the phrase, "They redd a room around here still," or, "Redd up a room." Local people got a little tired of accounting for that r-e-d-d, which didn't mean anything to them. So they started saying, "Rid a room." But to redd up a room, or redd a room, is good old Scotch-Irish for making a room neat. The Scotch-Irish and the Pennsylvania Germans were two groups of pioneers who went into [Penn's] Woods together, and you find many of them out in the Midwest today.

I find that cautionary words for children have been interchanged around here. There are a great many English people, or people of various nationalities, who will use some of the cautionary words for children, or the little phrases the children were taught. One of the words which has pretty well disappeared here in Pottsville now, but which the older people remember, was "saddy." They did not know how to spell "saddy" any more than they knew how to spell "moshie." And they spelled the latter m-o-z-y, or just dismissed it as unspellable. But to say "saddy" was to say an infantine "Thank you." Nobody knows why, what saddy was or anything about it, except that it was something you taught to children.

Then there were other things for the usual annoyances that children are capable of. They were told not to *ruch* and that was that they weren't to squirm or fidget. And the little girls' hair was *strubblich* [or *struwlich*], but by the time that got out to Ohio, the same rats' nests were called *strubbly*, meaning disheveled or unkempt. And around here still an awkward child is said to be *doppich*, an awkward stupidity; the Scotch-Irish have the same meaning for the old Scottish word, *glaket*. And, of course, a fidgety child here is like a frisky colt—it's *schusslich*.

Just as it's difficult to tell sometimes where those stories come from originally, there are a lot of phrases that people ridicule in the Pennsylvania Dutchman that are just legitimate German idioms. The first time you may be startled at this, "He has right!" when somebody is commended for being within his rights; but, after all, that's just a German idiom literally translated into English.

One of my friends had a maid who was Pennsylvania German, so that I know when she had to do hasty dusting, what we call "a lick and a promise," she would admonish the dust particles with a Pennsylvania Dutch expression which translated into English is, "Anything that wants to go along had better stick its head up."

In the same family there was another phrase that fascinated me

(which may or may not be Pennsylvania Dutch because they had a later ancestry too in their family): When the friend's mother cautioned her about sewing, and taking her time, and doing it right, she would say to her, "Now don't do it with a hot needle and a burning thread." And that same friend, Rebecca Frick, is authority for my saying that it was when you sewed something on Good Friday that really in the hereafter you would have to rip those stitches out with your nose.

CYCLE OF LOUIE AND FRED JOKES

Many years ago a cycle of "Louie and Fred" jokes circulated orally in English among the Pennsylvania Dutch people of Schuylkill County. How and where they originated was not known, but the jokes were welcome because of the laughter they created.

Louie and Fred were represented as two Pennsylvania Dutch tavern-keepers who were not only business competitors but rivals in the use of the English language. Neither was an expert linguist but the story pattern made Louie less bright than Fred. Generally, a joke was first told to Louie by a traveling salesman dropping into his bar for a beer or to sell him some merchandise. The humor lay in Louie's bungling the punch line as he tried to repeat the salesman's joke to Fred.

The following samples of Louie and Fred jokes were remembered by Miss E. Louise Bigler:²²

One time a salesman came into Louie's bar and asked him how many doors he had in his building, and Louie said he had three doors—the front door, the back door, and the side door. "Oh, no, you don't," says the salesman. "You have four—the front door, the side door, the back door, and the cuspidor."

Well, Louie thought that was very funny, and he is going to tell it to his friend, Fred. He says to Fred: "How many doors do you have in your building?" Fred says, "We have three doors—the front, the side, and the back."

"Oh, no, you don't," says Louie. "You have four—the front door, the side door, the back door, and the spit box."

One time another salesman selling Shakespeare books comes into the bar and he's trying to sell them to Louie. And Louie says he didn't want any kind of beer, that he already had Rettig's, and he had Yuengling's, and that was enough beer to carry.

"But these are books," says the salesman.

"Well, I have bocks, too," says Louie, meaning bock beer.

A salesman happens to be in Louie's bar when the lights go out suddenly. "Do you know the reason the lights are out?" says the salesman, and Louie says no. "It's because the sparrows are eating the current," says the salesman.

Well, Louie thinks that's a pretty good joke. So he tries to tell it to Fred. "Do you know why the lights are out?" says Louie, and Fred says, "Why?"

"Because the sparrows are eating the raisins off the wire," says Louie.

SCHUYLKILL COUNTY SAYINGS

God never sends winter until the wells are filled.²³

After the whippoorwill plant blooms there never is more frost.²⁴

He would skin a louse for its fat.²⁵

He would skin a louse for its hide and tallow.²⁶

He was tighter than the bark on a tree.²⁷

We will pass him up like a freight train ignores a hobo.²⁸

That dirt bank is full of coal as high as an Irish church.²⁹

You're right as two rabbits.³⁰

An onion in your shoe keeps the snakes away.³¹

He'll bend hell out of your ear.³²

Never take your watch to a blacksmith.³³

All you get out of a jug is a grunt.³⁴

"Don't take a shingle off the roof." This is usually said by a bartender under the following circumstances: Three or four men are in a barroom. Several rounds of drinks are bought. One of the men says, "Have one on me," to which you say, "I think I'll pass this one up." The bartender looks down on you and says, "Don't take a shingle off the roof." What he means is, "Don't take

business away from me," or "Don't take bread from my children's mouths."³⁵

"I'll be dickensed to it." This is used when something goes wrong, as, for example, "I'll be dickensed to it if they don't soon give that engineer a pusher [extra locomotive] to get him over the grade."³⁶

Midnight is the witching hour in a coal mine when ghosts walk and falls [off the mine roof] occur.³⁷

Whenever two anthracite miners met, they always greeted each other with these words: "How's she cuttin'?" That greeting came from the fact that a coal seam has at its base a thin strip of black mud. It may have been the clay in which grew the vegetation that formed anthracite. At any rate, that soft base of the coal seam is called "mining," and was dug out by the miner by means of a small pick. After he had cut out as much of this as he could reach, then the coal was broken down, either by means of a drill, or holes were bored into the face of the coal and the coal was blasted out. This was a common method of mining, and the miners were always asking each other how they were getting along by saying, "How's she cuttin'?" This became so universal that whenever men greeted each other, even away from the mine, when they merely meant to say, "How do you do?" or "How are you?" they put it into the saying, "How's she cuttin'?"³⁸

The man and the dog outside and the woman and the cat inside.³⁹

COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE CUSTOMS

AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY, THE ANNUAL SUNDAY SCHOOL PICNIC was held in the grove under a clear blue sky. Several hundred people from various parts of the Swatara country enjoyed themselves on that warm August day. After listening to endless speeches and much band music, and after munching pretzels and roasted peanuts, and eating bowls of navy bean soup made, as only the Pennsylvania Dutch know how to make it, from smoked country ham, the teen-age boys and girls were in a mood to play the game they had been waiting for impatiently all day—the ring game, also known as “kiss ring,” and “ring tag.”

This was the Swatara country's favorite game for promoting romance—and marriage—among its young people. The game had the blessing of parents and church alike. It was played near the woods, away from the crowd, where the teen-agers could enjoy their kissing in comparative privacy.

The ring game must have been invented by a woman, for there was nothing in the social calendar better calculated to choose and trap a future husband. It played on a boy's greatest weakness—his fear of being humiliated by a girl's rejection of his proposals; it loosened his tongue and freed his inhibitions. On the other hand,

a girl could trap her man who was eluding her either out of shyness or bravado if she could lure him into the ring game where nature would assist her.

Any number could play the game. There was no musical accompaniment, either vocal or instrumental. In the Swatara country the game was played in this manner:

The girls clasp hands and form a circle. In unison they shout "Ring!" in response to which boys come running to them from every direction of the picnic grove. One girl becomes "it." She walks around the ring making a great pretense of having difficulty choosing the right boy. But no one is fooled. Poised for instant flight, she finally taps the boy of her choice lightly on the shoulder and is off like a startled fawn, her blonde hair flying in the summer breeze. He chases her around the ring. To hide her designs on the young man, she makes him chase her several times around the ring before slowing up. Finally, when she thinks she has made her point, she stops with her hands up and palms out. He touches her palms lightly as, across the barrier, they kiss. It's only a dainty peck as both are experimenting, and there will be another chance later.

Now it's the boy's turn to choose; he is "it." Unlike the designing females, he has not yet made up his mind about any of the girls, and is going to play the field. In the course of the game he finds himself chasing girls around the ring and being chased by them until he has gone full circle, having kissed every girl in the ring at least once.

He may not know it, but one particular girl has set her cap for him. She wants him for her boy friend and possible future husband. It's that pretty little blonde from whom he had received his first kiss of the afternoon. Again she taps him on the shoulder and races off, but now her pace is obviously slower. She allows herself to be caught even before she has made one round of the ring. There she stands in all her youthful appeal—blonde and blue-eyed, relaxed, smiling sweetly and confidently, waiting to be kissed. The boy responds to her warmth—he is no longer fearful of being denied or of having his face slapped for being fresh. He kisses her with the aggressiveness of a cave man hungry for love, roughing her up a bit to establish the dominance of a confident male, while she smiles smugly and submits her lips meekly. She has him hooked. Ten years and five children later he still will be wondering how it all happened.¹

There were many other traditional folk games to break the ice at social gatherings for husband-hunting girls and timorous farm-and-mine boys of marriageable age. Two or three generations ago, marriage and homemaking offered the only freedom from domestic drudgery under the parental roof to most teen-age girls. Higher education and professional careers, and even employment in five-and-ten-cent stores, and silk and hosiery mills, were still in the future.

No wonder, then, that farmer-miners' daughters began thinking about marriage before their sixteenth birthday, and that the more anxious among them were aggressive in choosing a mate. At a social party a girl might like a certain boy. By discreet questioning of other guests she might learn enough details of the boy's family background, personal habits, and future economic prospects to pique her curiosity. As the party was nearing its end she might invite the boy to see her home, a distance anywhere from one to five miles in the dark. As they reach the girl's front gate, the tired and sleepy escort is in a mood to settle for a goodnight kiss and wend his way home. But the girl is not quite ready to let him go. She has other plans: he must meet Mom and Pop who, in response to their darling daughter's wink, give the young man a warm welcome and make him feel at home.

In the pursuit of a husband, a girl had the complete co-operation of her parents and of folk traditions, and the blessings of her church and pastor. Without this support, courtship would have come much harder generations ago. Living off the beaten path and with no access to public transportation (stagecoach or train), a girl's choice of male companions was very much limited to her *Freindschaft* (clan), neighbors, and church members.

A unique example of West End isolation in the pre-automobile era was that of Almira Umholtz of Sacramento, Schuylkill County, who was born in a log cabin only a hundred feet from her burial place in the cemetery of St. Paul's Union Church. According to folklore, she never left this narrow strip of earth in her lifetime—a span of about sixty years.² Said an informant:

[Young people] had no other choice than to marry within the community because they just didn't get out of it. Now, for instance, we had people in Pine Grove that were born here, lived and died here, and never got outside the boundaries of Schuylkill County. And we had people who were born and raised here, and

possibly once or twice in their lifetime would go as far as the city of Lebanon, twenty-four miles away, because they didn't have the money to travel on trains. The only thing that they had in those days was a horse and buggy, and many of them couldn't afford that. So they just didn't get out of the community.

Even if they had had some money, they couldn't have afforded to take the time off to ride on a train to Lebanon or Pottsville. I recall very well that to get to Pottsville, which is eighteen miles from here [Pine Grove], you had to take a train at 6:15 in the morning, go to Auburn, wait there for a mainline train to Pottsville. You got in 9:30 or a quarter to ten—over three hours. Coming home you'd leave Pottsville around 4:30 in the afternoon and arrive here at 8:20 at night. Now our youngsters stand along the road and thumb their way, and in thirty minutes they are in Pottsville.

People got to the point where they were sort of timid about even talking to strangers from outside the community. They had to be. It took some time until they'd become familiar and really break down and talk to them because they sort of feared anybody from the outside.

The result was a lot of in-breeding, and the offspring were beginning to show it. Nearly everybody was somebody else's cousin, and up here in the mine patches they were so inbred that if you said anything about one person up there in the coal region, you were talking to a relative, you see what I mean. You just couldn't say anything about anybody because you were either talking about a cousin, or a sister, or brother, or a sister-in-law, or something like that.³

A suitor often accompanied his girl friend to church. St. Paul's Church in Sacramento had a curious deviation from this custom. Instead of entering the church, some boys remained outside to ogle their girl friends through the windows. This became quite a problem. When a new church building was being built in the nineties, the problem was solved in an ingenious manner: the lower half of each window was frosted over. That prevented the boys from peeping in as it was above their line of vision. The upper half of the window was left transparent for the benefit of members of the congregation whose horse-and-buggies waited in the churchyard while they were at services. They could still look out to see whether their horses were all right. The opaque-transparent windows were used until 1955 when stained-glass windows were put in during the remodeling of the church.⁴

BUNDLING

Widespread in folklore is this motif: An unmarried man and woman sleep on the same bed with an object between them to keep them chaste. The nature of the object is of little significance as long as it is something tangible to serve as a mutually agreeable symbol or token of their continence.

"In the early stages of culture," observes MacEdward Leach, "it was the common practice of men and women, who for any of a variety of reasons had to preserve abstinence from sexual intercourse, to sleep together with some object between them as a token of their abstinence. As society became more advanced and sophisticated, the sword, symbol of law, became the accustomed object. Folktales reflecting this practice were told, especially in the Orient. One such story, the *Two Brothers*, became immensely popular over Europe and Asia and was finally reworked in the 11th century into the popular romance, *Amis and Amiloun*. This romance in turn became the source of the motif in later literature in such stories as the famous *Tristan*."⁵

Bundling, which makes use of this motif, is an ancient custom once practised in many parts of the world, including Holland, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland. It appeared early in the United States, especially in New England, where the Puritans practiced it for many generations without much sacrifice of chastity, as the Reverend Samuel Peters (1735–1826) reminds us in his *General History of Connecticut*: "I am no advocate for temptation; yet must say, that bundling has prevailed 160 years in New England, and, I verily believe, with ten times more chastity than sitting on a sofa."⁶

Old Peter Stuyvesant and church authorities of New Amsterdam frequently expressed concern over this form of courting in their colony. "The custom of queesting, or bundling, imported from the old home may have proved a snare for the unwary feet of the young men and maidens of New Netherland," observed George Elliott Howard in his three-volume work, *A History of Matrimonial Institutions*. As the historic case of *Seeger v. Slingerland* indicated, bundling existed in New York up to 1804, the year of that case, and probably much longer.⁷

As a matter of history and of folklore, bundling was practiced in

many states in the pioneer era. Pennsylvania certainly was among them. In 1938 the late A. Monroe Aurand, Jr., published a pamphlet in which he documented his belief that bundling was lingering on as a social custom in remote parts of the commonwealth.⁸

Bundling, however, must have been shattered on the rock of the famous court decision of 1845, known in Pennsylvania legal history as *Hollis v. Wells*—shattered, that is, as a widespread custom, though it may have continued in remote and isolated pockets of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for years after 1845. The historic decision was handed down by the Court of Common Pleas of Lehigh County. The plaintiff father was denied damages for the seduction of his daughter in bundling. The court held that the father's prior knowledge "amounted to connivance."⁹ This was a blow at the heart of bundling, for in virtually every case the custom was practiced with the consent of the girl's parents.

"Much has been said by the plaintiff's counsel about the custom in courtship which he has denominated 'bundling'," said the judge in his charge to the jury. "He has said this custom prevails very generally in the part of the country where these parties reside. This may be so, but I am unwilling to believe it. If it is so, it is time the custom should be abolished. Even if this custom does prevail, it furnishes no excuse for the plaintiff's carelessness, or his daughter's indiscretion. . . ."¹⁰

The West End of Schuylkill County was long one of the Commonwealth's remotest and most isolated pockets, cut off from main traveling ways by coal-bearing mountains. This accounts for so many customs and traditions surviving there long after they had disappeared elsewhere in the state and in the nation.

Bundling was practiced in the West End coal field when it was still a backward community, its unsophisticated people living in a pioneer environment. It appealed to a thrifty people like the Pennsylvania Dutch who regarded bundling as a convenience for saving fuel in winter. At bedtime (usually about nine o'clock) the fire was damped down and lights (candles or oil lamps) put out for the night as the family retired. In pioneer homes usually only one room was kept warm, the kitchen-living room, while the rest of the house was unheated. The warmest place was a bed under heavy covers. An engaged couple, or a boy and girl keeping steady company, were allowed by the girl's parents to sleep together in the same

bed but separated by some object to prevent "natural consequences."

Methods of separating bundlers to keep them chaste varied from home to home: One required the girl to sleep underneath the top sheet or first cover while the boy occupied the top of the cover, the same sheet thus separating them. A bolster between boy and girl has already been mentioned here; and a center board down the middle of the bed proved an effective device for keeping the boy on his side and the girl on her side. Occasionally a boy was asked to submit to a bundling bag that covered him from armpits to the ends of his toes, and it had pull strings yet! The girl's father tended to the strings himself.

In 1940 the Schuylkill County unit of the Writers' Project, Works Progress Administration (WPA), learned that bundling had existed in the West End. One reporter interviewed elderly men and women who were quoted, directly and indirectly, on their experiences with bundling or on what they had heard about the custom from their parents or grandparents.

These reports came into the office in such numbers that the WPA unit editor was obliged to call a halt. At the bottom of one type-written report sheet he scrawled, "Enough of this,"¹¹ while at the bottom of another report sheet he wrote, "No more of this."¹²

One of the WPA's informants was quoted indirectly as having said that bundling was practiced in the agricultural valleys "from generations way back up to the time of his early manhood."¹³ In 1957 I interviewed this informant, an octogenarian, who was more specific, saying that the custom was practised in Pine Grove Township, but not in the borough of the same name. He placed the time as preceding the coal-mining period, which conflicts with his WPA statement, unless he was quoted incorrectly. "They went to bed to stay warm," he told me. "It wasn't so bad as what people thought of it."¹⁴

Another of the 1940 WPA informants was an anonymous eighty-year-old former anthracite miner who remembered when this custom was everyday practice. "Nothing more was thought about it," said the WPA reporter, "than if the 'sweethearts' had been doing their courting in the kitchen; since kitchen or bedroom it would have had to be as practically no house could boast of a living room." This old gentleman candidly "confesses" that he indulged in this form of courtship just sixty years ago. He at that time began keeping steady company with the young lady whom he later married.¹⁵

ALL-NIGHT COURTING

All-night courting was an acceptable social custom as reflected in the following anecdote:

A feller called on his girl one Saturday night. When the time came for him to go home it started to rain. The girl's mother said, "John will have to sleep here tonight. We can't send him out in the rain."

"All right, Mom, if you say so."

Meanwhile, John had disappeared. He lived a mile and a half down the road.

"Where is John?" asked the mother.

"I don't know, Mom, he was just here."

Soon John came back drenched to the skin and looking like a whipped puppy.

"Why, John, where have you been?" asked the girl's mother.

"I overheard you and Mary talking about me staying over night. As long as I was going to sleep here I went home to fetch my pajamas."¹⁶

Several generations ago *O, Susie Owl* was sung by the young people of the Lykens Valley at every social gathering. As conditions changed, the song was all but forgotten. In 1955 there was a reunion of the class of '04 of Shepley's School west of Gratz, and with much nostalgia the old song was revived—at least for an evening. There was no doubt among the aging survivors of the class of '04 that all-night courting had been a custom in the social life of Lykens Valley. The first verse of *O, Susie Owl* provides the documentation:

O! Susie I wish 'twas night
That I might fly to my heart's delight;
The very best plan you ever did see
Is courting all night and sleep[ing] next day.¹⁷

The WPA reported an interview with a twenty-seven-year-old informant who disclosed, according to the WPA reporter, that he often had picked up boy hitchhikers who confided in him that they were either on their way to all-night courting sessions with their sweet-hearts, or were returning home from them. "This whole procedure is done with full knowledge of the parents of the girl involved," reads

the WPA writer's report. "These are not apparently just isolated cases, for quite often as many as three and four of these young fellows have been picked [up], all with the same mission in mind."¹⁸

There were several reasons for parental approval of all-night courting. First, it saved the prospective son-in-law a long walk home in the dark; second, the girl was in her own home and presumably under her parents' protection; and third, whatever happened, a wedding would follow. In those days when a boy started going steady with a girl everybody assumed that sooner or later he was going to marry her. That is what usually happened, as the selection of mates was limited. Length of a courtship depended on how soon the couple could "make their own way."

A wise, elderly informant made the following comment on the custom of all-night courting in the West End:

A great many of the young men working in the mines would court a girl who lived in the country. That is, they would get out to the farms and find girls and marry them and bring them into town, a distance, perhaps, of three to four miles from town.

They did not bundle. They just didn't go to bed, that was all. They would just lie around and sleep in the parlor or wherever it happened to be, you know, until morning—until daylight—and then they'd go home. One summer when I was a junior in high school I got a job at the local brickyard at night taking coal to the kilns, you know, to keep them going, and on a Sunday morning about five o'clock when daylight came up, I'd see a lot of these fellows walking along the railroad, you know, going home from seeing their girls. They had been there all night, see? Today they go in an automobile and come back, but those days they had to walk.

A lot of the boys and girls married quite young. The job in the mines didn't pay enough, but if the girl got into trouble [as a result of all-night courtship] they would be married right away whether they were sixteen or eighteen. Age didn't make any difference. The parents [the boy's and the girl's] would try to get them started in housekeeping.

Many children were born out of wedlock. When this happened the community appeared shocked for a little while, but they would also take the attitude that this was the natural course of events, and it soon was forgotten. We didn't like it, but we accepted it.

I have spent a good many years here. I've known a good many people, and I have a good memory. I am amused sometimes to find that some of the married women who stepped across the traces when they were young and had to get married are the ones

who appear most shocked when the thing happens now. Yet these girls have turned out to be good girls. They have nice families. They get along well.

So, after all, you can't change human nature, you know.¹⁹

BULL BANDS AND CALITHUMPIANS

All newlyweds, rich and poor alike, received a mock serenade on their wedding night from a group of noisemakers and pranksters commonly called a bull band, but also known under a more fancy name, calithumpians.

Today newlyweds usually get into a car and escape to a secret honeymoon hideaway, but several generations ago the West End bridegroom could not afford to take time off from his work in the mines for a honeymoon, nor did he have the cash for two train tickets and other expenses. So the bride and groom had their honeymoon at home, and thereby became easy targets for the calithumpians who created a din in front of the house with an assortment of devices including tin horns and whistles, dishpans, conch shells, drums, dinner and cow bells, and abandoned wash boilers. The principal instrument of torture, however, was the *Sei Geig* (hog-scalding trough) that was converted into the body of a crude bull fiddle with wires for fiddle strings stretching from one end of the trough to the other. A well-rosined plank, requiring the services of two men, was used as a bow. This improvised bull fiddle and the other devices produced infernal, frightful, deafening, and shattering noises, to the annoyance of the whole wedding party and of their neighbors as well.²⁰

Lykens Valley had an even more tumultuous instrument than the *Sei Geig*. It was an old engine boiler mounted on a cart. With a man at either side rotating a heavy iron rod inside the boiler, and up to a dozen men hammering away on the outside, the resultant noise was loud enough to wake up the dead.²¹

The bull band or calithumpians were boys and girls of the same village or neighborhood as the bride and bridegroom who had been overlooked when wedding invitations were issued. Not only were they angry over this slight but they were also thirsty and hungry.

They would keep up their noise until the bride's father opened the door and invited them inside for drinks, cake and ice cream, and cigars. Sometimes they demanded money or a keg of beer.

There were times when a prospective bride and bridegroom found it expedient to keep their wedding a secret from the community. To avoid the bull band they might be married at a relative's home or even in the preacher's home, but somehow their secret leaked out. Two or three amateur detectives would shadow the bridegroom until they made certain where the wedding would be held. While the bride and bridegroom thought they were safe, the bull band quietly assembled its cohorts for the nocturnal assault on the wedding party's ears. The bull band announced its surprise presence with a sudden blast of discord, after dark, that was powerful enough to unroof the houses.

West End mock-serenades of newlyweds was a survival of a marriage-baiting custom long popular in European countries under various names, especially in France where it was known as *charivari*. Introduced into the United States by French Canadians and the French settlers of Louisiana, the original name was corrupted to "shivaree" by which it is known in American folklore. The custom under its American name had quite a vogue on the frontier in the South and Middle West, and also spread to Pennsylvania Dutchland.

About all that is left of the custom in the West End is the parade of honking automobiles with tin cans and old shoes trailing behind the bridal car. B. A. Botkin says that the noisemaking feature of the shivaree "may once have been intended to drive away evil spirits . . . The treat exacted from the bridal couple in the form of drinks, cigars, candy, ice cream, etc., may be a survival of the practice of purchasing peace by ransom."²²

LOW TEMPERATURE

A YOUNG MAN escorted two sisters who lived in *Nausedahl* (Nosedale), home of the Cressona camp meeting. They entertained him in the kitchen. The furniture consisted of an old-fashioned wood cook-stove and a board table with a bench extending along each side. He sat on one side and the two girls sat on the other. Without any warning, the girls' father burst into the room and exclaimed, "Girls,

make yourselves to bed," and to the young man, he said: "And you make yourself home. You're sitting too far apart anyhow."²³

COURTESY OF THE ROAD

THIS STORY HAPPENED in the dark woods on the road that leads out into the farming country behind Suedberg [Schuylkill County]. A certain young farmer went with his horse and buggy and fetched some young pigs, three or four, and put them in a bran sack.

As he was driving home, up through the dark woods, he met his neighboring farmer's daughter. This young girl was probably sixteen, seventeen years old. He knew her well. Stopping his horse, he said, "Mary, you can gladly ride along if you want to."

She said: "All right," and crawled up on the buggy, and they started off. Then in a little while she began to cry.

Then the farmer said: "Why, Mary, what's wrong?"

"Why," she said, "I'm afraid that you'll attack me."

"Why," he said, "Mary, how could I then. I must drive with one hand and I must hold the little pigs with the other hand."

"All right," she said, "but I could have held the little pigs."²⁴

SHORT MEMORY

A WOMAN who was expecting her first child went with her husband to visit a doctor and the doctor, after examining her, said:

"Can you tell me, you know, just when you expect this baby?"

So Jenny looked at her husband and she said:

"Charlie, ven vas the Hetzel picnic?"²⁵



FOLK MEDICINE

LIKE ANTHRACITE SEAMS EMBEDDED IN PARALLEL STRATA OF ROCKS, THERE are several layers of medical lore among the Pennsylvania Dutch farm-mine population in the Swatara country. They may be classified as follows:

1. Scientific, professional medicine practised by licensed physicians;
2. Traditional household remedies prepared by the people from herbs, roots, barks, and berries;
3. Care of injured miners;
4. Magical, supernatural, and sympathetic cures, many of which originated in ancient religious cults, which are known collectively as *Brauche* or powwowing.

The experience of Dr. David S. Moyer (1852–1928) was typical of the horse-and-buggy medical practice in the Swatara country and, for that matter, throughout the anthracite region, in the latter half of the nineteenth century. A graduate of Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia, he opened an office in Donaldson in 1882. He was the only physician not only in Donaldson but in the surrounding territory, including many mine patches.

It was just impossible for one man to cover this territory, much of it mountainous, but Dr. Moyer tried his best to do it. The telephone had not yet come into widespread use. When a doctor was

needed, a member of the family was sent to get him even though he might have to walk a lonely road five or more miles, often in the dark of night. And Dr. Moyer had the reputation of never turning down a sick call regardless of the hour, the weather, and his own feelings. Many a time he got up out of his warm bed to respond to the call of mercy. He knew that among these poor but self-reliant people the doctor was never called except in the most serious illnesses. His compassion was touched. He was needed—desperately needed.

There were no paved roads. Even in good weather, a buggy ride was exhausting because of the ruts and rocks that caused the vehicle to shake. When it rained, the buggy had to make its way through mud almost hub deep. In the winter Dr. Moyer used a sleigh but always carried a shovel along to open a way through the deep snow. His sleigh bells announced his coming to a worried family long before he hove in sight.

Dr. Moyer was in a real sense a family doctor. He was prepared to treat for any and all kinds of diseases. There were the common children's diseases: mumps, measles, diphtheria, whooping cough, scarlet fever, croup, and earaches. Typhoid fever and malaria were quite prevalent. Everybody had erysipelas, probably from eating too much salt meat. Dr. Moyer delivered babies, set bones broken in the mines, and amputated limbs when necessary, the surgery being performed without the aid of X-rays. He even extracted teeth.

His fee for a house call was one dollar, and he furnished medicine free to the patient; a confinement case brought five dollars. With low wages and intermittent work in the coal mines, many families could not afford to pay the doctor even at these rates. That was all right with Dr. Moyer. He entered the debt on his books and forgot about it.

To take care of such a large practice by himself in a day of slow transportation left Dr. Moyer little time for leisure. He walked, talked and ate fast. But he did take time out for cigar smoking. He bought a special brand by the boxful, and in the evening, after he had bid good night to his last patient, he would light up a cigar and relax.

Working as strenuously as he did, it is a wonder he did not break down. But he remained in good health until the 1920's when hardening of the arteries forced him to retire. His family engaged a nurse for him in the last stage of his illness. But until the day he died, in 1928, he dictated prescriptions for his old patients who had them filled in nearby Tremont.¹

TRADITIONAL HOME REMEDIES

Dr. Moyer sometimes was annoyed when a patient put off too long consulting him about a serious ailment. "Well, why didn't you come before?" he would say. "Why did you wait so long?"

Physician and patients alike knew the answers to these questions—traditional home remedies. The people would try their own remedies first and only when these failed did they call the doctor. There was hardly a miner's family in the West End that was without its treasure of remedies concocted from a great variety of roots, herbs, barks, and berries grown mostly in their own back yards for medicinal purposes.

One eighty-year-old miner's widow gave me a list of plants that she once grew in her own garden or picked from nearby fields and colliery yards because they were known to be the raw ingredients of medical formulae. Her list included the following: anise, burdock, blue mint, Balm of Gilead, catnip, calamus root, camomile, dandelion root, gold seal root, German mint, horehound, horsemint, Indian physic, Mandrake (May apple), mullein or mullen, pennyroyal tea, pokeberries, parsley root, sage, sweet marjoram, semia leaf, stramonium (also called Jimson, or stink weed), thyme, and white mint.

Family gardens would have a corner set aside for these medicinal plants. They were picked in the summer, dried and stored in glass jars, each jar bearing its own label. When a housewife needed a cough syrup or some other specific, she remembered the recipe and selected the proper ingredients from the jars. These medicinal recipes were passed down from one generation to another orally like any other type of folklore. The folk mind is tenacious. It never forgets a medicinal recipe nor a favorite ballad.

Of special concern to mothers and grandmothers were the children who served as guinea pigs for innumerable formulae. The bad-smelling asafetida bag dangling from a child's neck was supposed to protect it from the evil spirits of disease and to ward off the evil eye of the witch. Nevertheless, children still fell prey to one kind of disease or another, especially in the winter.

For a cold or a sore throat, a piece of cloth that had been greased with lard and dipped into kerosene was wrapped around a child's throat. And there were many kinds of cough syrup. Calamus root, horehound, and wild cherry were frequently used for this purpose.

Indian physic and many other plants were made into purgatives, but for just a plain bellyache, catnip served. In many West End homes, children had to submit to a weekly purgative on Friday evening. Why Friday? There was no school on Saturday.

Boneset was esteemed for its many tonic properties. Although strong and bitter, it was taken as a tea. Much boneset grew around collieries. One Pine Grove woman remembered parties of friends gathering this herb late in the fall on the mountain in the vicinity of the Lincoln Colliery. Children did not like it particularly, but they took it because they were told that it purified their blood.

In a case of croup, the poor child not only had its chest rubbed with goose grease, but would also have to drink the stuff, sweetened with rock candy.

There were innumerable ways of getting rid of a wart. One remedy was to rub a piece of chalk on the wart, then lift a stove lid, and chalk a mark on the reverse side of the lid. When the mark had been burned away, the wart disappeared!

Miss Anna Salen, retired school teacher of Tremont, recollects the following remedies used at home during her girlhood:

In our garden we had saffron tea, sage tea, and mint tea. We used elderberry blossoms for grip; elderberries were found right up the back here. I can see them from my kitchen door. When the blossoms opened the other week I felt tempted to go out and gather a couple of handfuls.

But most of the medicinal plants grew in the woods up the mountain. Father collected them for us. He was familiar with the rough ground and kept in his head the blooming time of every flower and plant that had any medicinal value. So he made regular trips to the mountain, from early spring when the sap started to run in the birches until the fall when he brought back pail after pail of teaberries.

We kids wanted to go along, but Father would not think of it because of the danger of falling into one of the air holes that went into the mines from the surface. That would have resulted in instant death. There was also the danger of rattlesnake bites. Father caught several rattlesnakes each summer and brought them home to render their oil, which was good for earaches.

When I was a little girl, miners' kids—and I was one of them—went about barefooted throughout the summer. We couldn't afford more than one pair of shoes, which were hoarded like gold for school and church. So we stepped into rusty nails, broken glass, or splinters that sometimes developed into gangrene or lock-jaw. In such accidents the foot was washed thoroughly and then

bathed in turpentine; and a slice of bacon was laid on the wound to draw out, as we thought, the inflammation, and we tied it up with a clean rag.

Every spring Mother dosed us with sulphur and molasses and sassafras tea to thin out the blood for summer.²

Nor were grownups overlooked when traditional household remedies were dispensed. For example, "morning bitters" was a popular drink among miners. Essentially it was whiskey with a mixture of snake-root, gold seal, and/or calamus root, sweetened with rock candy. Miners felt the need of coughing up coal dust that lodged in their throats overnight. Morning bitters accomplished this purpose and at the same time satisfied their craving for a taste of whiskey.

One elderly informant remembered that one of her remedies helped save her brother's life. Her brother, living at Minersville, several miles from her home, was critically ill of pneumonia. Her remedy was a poultice made of rye meal, vinegar, and onion boiled together. She and her mother took turns preparing the poultice and laying it on her brother's chest. Needless to say, her brother recovered. Later she used the same recipe on her husband and it saved him, too. She still has faith in its efficacy.³

One of the common ailments among miners was rheumatism which developed from their working in damp mines. There were innumerable cures for this ailment. One of them was a poultice of cow dung. Another was the copper-and-zinc cure. The victim simply fitted a copper sole inside one of his boots and one made of zinc in the other, which he wore for two weeks. Then the copper and zinc soles were alternated between one shoe and the other, a procedure that continued until the rheumatism disappeared.

Then there was the bumblebee cure. A screen was erected around the feet and a swarm of bees was released inside to sting the victim. The pain was such that the sufferer forgot all about his rheumatism!

A Pennsylvania Dutch housewife was asked the name of a certain plant in her garden.

"Oh," said the housewife, "that's a whippoorwill."

"Whippoorwill? Why, that's the name of a bird," said the visitor.

"Yes, but this is a whippoorwill plant because after it blooms there never is any more frost."

And this brings to mind the Pennsylvania Dutch belief that when the whippoorwill (the bird, that is) came, rheumatic sufferers would make the rheumatism disappear for the rest of the year by rolling on

the ground. The whippoorwill is one of the last birds to come and the earliest to leave.⁴

CARE OF INJURED MINeworkERS

Good Christians all, both great and small,
I pray ye lend an ear,
And listen with attention while
The truth I will declare;
When you hear this lamentation,
It will cause you to weep and wail,
About the suffocation
In the mines of Avondale.⁵

Thus opens "The Avondale Mine Disaster," the most famous of anthracite mining ballads, which unfolds the tragic story of the hard-coal industry's earliest major disaster which snuffed out the lives of 110 mineworkers on September 6, 1869.

"Men, if you must die with your boots on," said John Siney, union leader, on the day after the disaster, "die for your families, your homes, your country, but do not longer consent to die like rats in a trap for those who take no more interest in you than in the pick you dig with."⁶

While anthracite miners had been pleading for mine safety legislation over a period of many years, it took a catastrophe like that at Avondale to spur the Pennsylvania Legislature to action.

For the first time in Pennsylvania history, in the annual message of Governor John White Geary on January 5, 1870, the safety of the commonwealth's coal miners was recommended.

Said the Governor:

The mines in many cases are constructed and managed in the most selfish and parsimonious manner, the owners exacting the largest amount of profit from them, for the least possible outlay. Consequently some of them, like that of Avondale, are nothing but underground mantraps, without any other outlets than wooden chimneys and these consequently liable to become blazing volcanoes through which escape is impossible.⁷

Without a dissenting vote, the house and senate passed the anthracite mine safety act which Governor Geary approved on March 3,

1870. Ultimately this act was reviewed by the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania. Here is an excerpt in which the Court expresses its opinion:

This great public calamity [Avondale disaster], and the investigation which followed, revealed the fact that the business of mining was negligently conducted, and that the lives of miners were constantly imperiled. Public sentiment demanded that this should be the subject of legislative provision, and this statute embodies the action of the legislature thereon.⁸

Care of the seriously injured in anthracite mines was a serious problem which the Pennsylvania Legislature recognized and expressed in the following preamble written into the act of 1870 incorporating "the Miners' Hospital and Asylum in Schuylkill County":

The risks and dangers attending the mining, preparing and transporting of coal are so great that accidents and casualties are of constant occurrence; and many persons so engaged are injured and maimed in body and limb who from want of means, or other cause, are not properly cared for and supplied with the necessary medical and surgical assistance.⁹

Every time an underground accident occurred, miners would risk their own lives to go to the aid of the victims. This was in keeping with a tradition that had grown through the years. Despite heroism, emergency care of the injured was often ineffectual because methods were primitive. The miners knew nothing of tourniquets, splints, bandages, and stretchers. To check a hemorrhage a quid of chewing tobacco was stuffed into raw flesh and an unclean rag wrapped around the wound. To soothe pain from burns, fish oil from miners' cap lamps was poured on the burned surface; and rough blasting paper instead of linen dressing was used to cover it. Bandages were improvised from dirty handkerchiefs and shirts off the rescuers' backs. In the absence of stretchers, injured miners were carried out of the mine on a board, a method that merely aggravated the patient's condition. From the head of the slope or shaft, the injured man was transferred to a mule-drawn cart (when it was available) and thus taken home.

The number of injured and killed anthracite mineworkers increased as the industry dug deeper into the earth for hard coal seams. One of the principal factors contributing to the high accident rate was insufficient information among miners and colliery officials alike as to the cause and methods of preventing accidents.

Seriously injured miners from the West End were taken to the Pottsville Hospital after its official opening on July 22, 1895.¹⁰ As staff surgeon, Dr. George H. Halberstadt was often shocked by what he saw of injured miners admitted to the hospital. Not until 1899, after he had served in the Army Medical Corps during the Spanish-American War, could he do anything to improve emergency care of the injured. In that year, the Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company created the post of company surgeon and appointed Dr. Halberstadt to fill it.

One of his first steps was to persuade a young medical student, R. R. Jones of Pottsville, to volunteer to teach the company's miners the rudiments of emergency aid. The student tackled his pioneer assignment in the Mahanoy Valley in the summer of 1899, just prior to his senior year at the medical school of the University of Pennsylvania. Having virtually no technical knowledge of the subject, he played it by ear. There was not a single stretcher nor dressing in those mines, and so he improvised his own equipment. No wonder the saying was that most injured miners came up from the mine in a sack.

In 1958 that young medical student was an eighty-one-year-old retired physician living in Roxboro, North Carolina. Having read of my research project, he wrote me offering information about his pioneer experiment in first aid. Naturally, I accepted his offer and over a period of several weeks there followed a series of handwritten letters from him which were crammed with information, such as the following:

Care of the injured immediately after injury? Just about what usually happens on the street today when an accident occurs. "Stand back; give the poor devil air, etc." seems to be the limit until someone calls the police; then the police call an ambulance. Fortunately, they do not move the injured until competent hands come. Now, picture miners in 1899. A buddy falls, is blasted down a breast, or hit by a fall of loosened rock by the force of the blast. Now also picture, if you will, those present—their origin, their mode of living, their hazardous type of work. There were no safety electrical lamps on their caps, just open torch lamps. The mines were usually very wet. It was rough—crude. The hearts in those men were good, but what could you expect from the general intelligence of those men in those days?

Dr. Halberstadt had the experience of a medical officer in the Spanish-American War, and then as surgeon to the company saw

the results of poor handling of the injured as they arrived in the hospital. It was his idea to do something along the lines of hospital corpsmen in the army.

With nothing to guide me I went down where accidents happened and tried to demonstrate, mostly through interpreters, how to be careful to not hurt the poor fellow more than he actually was. If there were litters down inside I never saw one. Nothing to cover open wounds. Sepsis was corruption in those days . . . So with any means at hand, the man would be taken up the shaft, or if in a breast, at the end of a drift (tunnel) in a coal car drawn by a mule. Then to their homes by a mine wagon of some kind, and not over concrete roadways . . .¹¹

The year 1899 was notable for another, more successful pioneer effort in first-aid training—in the small mining town of Jermyn, near Scranton, Pennsylvania.

Founder of this movement was Dr. Mathew Shields, then Jermyn's only doctor, who practiced among miners and their families. Like Dr. Halberstadt at Pottsville and Dr. Moyer at Donaldson, he was frequently shocked to see injured miners die because of incompetent care inside the mine. Often he accompanied critically injured miners to the Emergency (now General) Hospital in Carbondale, about four miles from Jermyn. Even when the mules were lashed to a gallop, the black mine ambulance often arrived too late to save the poor devil's life.

A background of ten years of this in Jermyn lay behind his decision to start a class of "impromptu work," the term then employed for first aid. On October 25, 1899, Dr. Shields called a meeting in the old Carpenter's Hall, now the Windsor Hotel, and formed the first class of twenty-five members. Its official name was "First-Aid Association of Jermyn, Pa." Dr. Shields was elected instructor with the title of medical director and inspector.

The first textbook was an elementary study of anatomy borrowed from the Jermyn school, supplemented by Dr. Shields' rattling office skeleton. The first linen came from miners' homes and the first splints were supplied by the Jermyn Coal Company.

Handbooks from England's St. John's Ambulance Corps, a group experienced in coal-mining first aid, had been ordered; but when the copies arrived, Dr. Shields found them inapplicable to American mines. He then compiled a textbook of his own, which was edited for him by Thomas Boundy in whose Jermyn printing office it was published. Copyrighted in 1901 under the title *First Aid Handbook*,

this is the pioneer textbook in the first-aid training field in the United States.

The members of Dr. Shields' class paid twenty-five cents each a month as dues, and assessed themselves an additional five cents each payday to buy unbleached muslin that their wives rolled into sterile bandages. First-aid boxes were nailed to props at various strategic stations throughout the Jermyn mine. At the class's suggestion, mine officials built an ambulance station for emergency treatment of mine accident victims; and they installed a telephone to call the ambulance driver in an emergency, thus eliminating the whining colliery siren that used to sound over a wide area whenever men were hurt inside the mine. No longer need anxious wives and weeping children take up a vigil in front of the mine portal waiting to see who was brought up severely injured or killed.

Dr. Shields continued teaching his class until 1904 when fire razed his home and office in Jermyn. He then moved to Scranton where he took up the general practice of medicine. Although the original class was disbanded in 1906, he himself continued to show a keen interest in first aid, not only among miners but in relation to other crafts and trades.

It was from his pioneer efforts in little Jermyn that the great humanitarian program of first aid grew, until today millions of men, women, and children all over the country participate in this endeavor through the American Red Cross and the United States Bureau of Mines.¹²

BRAUCHE—POWWOWING

Halfway up the northern slope of Second Mountain in Tumbling Run Valley, about three miles from downtown Pottsville, is an abandoned farm that has become a legend. Most of the other farms in that latter-day Sleepy Hollow have some physical contact with civilization, such as a paved road. Not this one. It is isolated, inaccessible, and hidden underneath layers of brush and weeds as if ashamed of the evil name it has acquired in Schuylkill County folklore.

It is reached by a lane about a half a mile from the Orwigsburg road. You have to look hard to locate the foundations of the former

barns and farmhouse. There are weeds and briars—and lilac bushes, too—where the house once stood. Nearby is a spring that murmurs as it flows gently over a rock. Arbutus fringes a lane that runs in a northeasterly direction to the stream that gives the valley its name—Tumbling Run. The scraggly apple and cherry trees are dying. Westward from the clearing stretch fields, now fallow, where once growing grain swayed in the gentle summer breeze.

Those who remember the farm before evil overtook it say that it was prosperous, hewn out of a rocky surface in a virgin forest, as were several roads radiating from it. The labor required to build such a farm and such roads must have been enormous. Yet that work was allowed to go to waste through a belief in superstition.

This is the site of the Hex Cat Farm, origin of the weirdest folk tale to emerge from Schuylkill County, one which, at the time of the supernatural happenings, in September, 1911, stirred the imagination and taxed the credulity of the entire nation.

The farm was the property of Howell Thomas, a former anthracite miner living in Pottsville. It is still a mystery how Thomas, a miner, became interested in farming and why he chose such a secluded spot to develop his farm. Keeping house for him was his unmarried daughter, Mary Isabelle. He had another daughter, who was married and lived in nearby Orwigsburg.

Everything seemed to be going well on the Thomas farm until the contented farmer and Mary Isabelle received a solemn warning, from a woman who practiced the art of powwowing, to expect a black cat which was being sent by an enemy from Orwigsburg on a mission of evil. Believing, as many did, that witches turned into black cats and visited homes to cast their spells on human beings, Mary Isabelle grimly prepared herself for the coming ordeal with the hex cat. She carried a revolver in her apron at all times.

Finally the hex cat made its appearance on the Thomas Farm—a stalking black cat possessed of all the sinister powers of witchcraft. At the sight of Mary Isabelle it arched its back in what must have been an attitude of defiance, and bared its sharp white teeth.

The farmer's daughter, revolver in hand, trembled all over, yet stood her ground. She waited for the cat to approach within range and then taking careful aim, fired. To her dismay, the cat did not fall mortally wounded. Instead it blew up to four or five feet in length before her eyes. The cat made no attempt to strike back in fury. It merely slunk away, probably to return another night. The

Orwigsburg "witch," incarnated in this black cat, apparently could bide her time, as indicated by subsequent events.

Over a period of months one cow after another was hexed until the entire herd died. The same thing happened to the farm horses. The spell extended to the apple and cherry trees and to the vegetables. Everything seemed to wither and die under this terrible bewitchment.

Then came the greatest blow of all. Howell Thomas had been in good health up to within five months of his sudden death. The doctor who examined the farmer diagnosed the cause of death as a stroke, but Mary Isabelle was unconvinced. She insisted that her father had died as a result of the evil spell cast by the hex cat.

At the funeral Mary Isabelle caused a sensation when, in a fit of hysteria, she loudly accused her married sister of being the Orwigsburg witch responsible for the death of their father, and the whole weird hex story landed on front pages. After making the accusation, Mary Isabelle fainted.

Viewing their father's body at the time, the married sister exclaimed, "My God! My God, father, I didn't know I was accused of anything till I saw it in the newspapers. And they wouldn't leave me see you when you were alive."

"Yes," cried Mary Isabelle, recovering her composure, "he saw you all the time."

This remark was interpreted as meaning that when the father looked at the hex cat he was actually seeing his married daughter.

After the funeral, Mary Isabelle invited her friends and neighbors to help her rid the farm of the hex cat. Hundreds responded bearing arms. Although many shots were fired, there was no sign of the phantom cat. It was then that a powwow man warned that the cat could be killed only with a golden bullet. Several pellets were actually shaped from family jewelry in accordance with a Pennsylvania Dutch saying: "To break the spell of a bewitched gun, load the gun with a silver or golden bullet."

And the legend is that they got the cat (or rather *a* cat) and nailed it to a barn. Poor innocent animal, destroyed to satisfy superstition! That was supposed to have broken the spell on the Howell Thomas farm. Whether it did or not, the farm could not be sold, or be given away; and so it went to seed. It belongs to nature now.¹³

In contrast to *Hexerei* (witchcraft) dramatized by the Hex Cat

Farm incident, Pennsylvania Dutch mineworkers practiced *Brauche* (powwowing, or white magic) which depended on faith and sympathy for its success, and which sought to drive out evil.

Its essential character is explained in the following statement, prepared especially for this chapter by the Reverend Thomas R. Brendle, coeditor, with the late Claude W. Unger, of *Folk Medicine of the Pennsylvania Germans* (Norristown, Pa., 1935) :

Brauche is an antique way of healing whose roots go back to prehistoric times when an animistic conception of nature obtained. Though it has the Indian synonym, powwowing, it has no relation whatsoever to Indian medicine. Nor is it related to Christian faith healing or to Christian Science. In essence it is sympathy medicine with or without words.

We come upon it in the Old Testament, in the Atharva-Veda of India, in Homer's *Odyssey*, and in other ancient writings.

In England we come upon *brauch* or charm formulae in the 8th Century, and in Germany in the 10th Century. *Brauche* came to America from Europe.

Our legitimate medicine seeks to cure within the confines of the body but *Brauche* seeks to drive the personified illness out of the body and destroy it.¹⁴

Powwowing was introduced into the West End coal field by the Pennsylvania Dutch farmers who had come there to take up coal mining, but other ethnic groups also came under its influence. Passed down from one generation to another, it continued to have a firm hold on the mining population until recent times. Today it is more likely to be resorted to in terminal cases where the medical profession holds out no hope for recovery, as related in the following story:

Well, this lady calls me in. Her husband is sickly. He was epileptic in his younger days. Now he has a stroke. The last few years he's almost helpless. But the doctors didn't seem to be helping him too much any more, so somebody recommended a powwow man to her.

They called this powwow man in. He was there with Mr. B— for a while. He went through his didos, whichever they are, which I don't believe in. And she said he gave her husband orders that when the "little man" comes around again, he was to strike at him with the cane and try to hit him.

Well, Mr. B— was laying on the bed and all of a sudden he made a grab. He picked his cane up off the chair and, as Mrs. B— said, he made a strike in the air. And when he made this strike in the air, she heard a noise in the front room. She investi-

gated right away and there on a bureau in the room, in front of the bedroom, her daughter's cake plate was, and the whole center was broke out of the plate. The rim was intact but the center was broke out.

Now she said that happened right when her husband made the strike with the cane. Also she said that this morning at breakfast she had the molasses dish on the table, and when she was reaching into it with her knife, the molasses dish broke—molasses all over the table.

I said to her then, "Well, how's Sam getting along?"

"He shows an improvement. What do you think of it?"

"I don't believe in it, but if he's improving you'd better get that powwow man back again. He must be helping him, doing him some good."¹⁵

John B. Bowman had malaria in his boyhood. While he was lying on a couch with a high fever, a woman caller said to his mother: "Get stone bugs. Fry them in a pan, feed him nine the first day, one less each succeeding day for nine days, at the end of which he will be cured."¹⁶

A six-month-old child had "lost his rest," or suffered a decline. When the child had been reduced to nothing more than skin and bones, a friend of the family advised buying a small quantity of asafetida in a drugstore. This was done. Some was sprinkled on outside doorsills, some under the sick child's pillow in his cradle, and the rest was burned on the stove. The odor was so nauseating that it drove out the evil spirits tormenting the child and thus hastened its recovery.¹⁷

For an adult in the same condition, the victim, without having talked with anyone, should catch rain in a pot before sunrise; boil an egg in this, bore three holes in the egg with a needle, and carry it to an anthill made by big ants; and the afflicted person will find relief as soon as the egg has been devoured by the ants.¹⁸

To cure whooping cough: Cut three bunches of hair from the crown of the head of a child who has never seen its father; sew this hair up in an unbleached rag and hang it around the neck of the child who has the whooping cough; the thread with which this rag is sewed must also be unbleached.¹⁹

A remedy for a toothache: Stir the sore tooth with a needle until it shows blood; soak a thread in this blood. Then mix vinegar and flour well to form a paste, and spread it on a rag. Wrap the rag around the root of an apple tree, and tie it tightly with the blood-soaked thread, and cover up the root with earth.²⁰

A cure for colic: Take half a gill of good rye whiskey, and a pipeful of tobacco; pour the whiskey into a bottle, then smoke the pipe and blow the smoke into the bottle, shake it well, and drink it.²¹

For snake bite, repeat the following verse three times:

God has created all things and they were good
Thou only, serpent, are damned;
Cursed be thou and thy sting
Zing! Zing! Zing!²²

The granny woman of the South had her counterpart in the "wise woman" of the anthracite mine patches. While steeped in superstition, the latter was also competent to give emergency care to a burned or injured miner brought home from the mine, as Mrs. Ella Zerbey Elliott points out in her book, *Old Schuylkill Tales*:

Powwowing is still largely practiced about the mines. But when it is remembered that these healers of burns are practical nurses and experienced in the treatment and bandaging of the injured parts before they recite the charm or incantation the cures they effect are not so remarkable. In the Seventies a woman lived at Minersville, named Mrs. Reed. Dr. Wm. Beach said of her that "she was one of the most skillful dressers of wounds." When a man was burned at the mines she could attend his case as well as any physician. It was this ability that cured or helped the man and not her powwowing to "draw out the fire." But you could not convince believers in the occult of this.²³

MINE MULES AND CATTLE

Having lived close to animals on their farms for many generations, the Pennsylvania Dutch are known for their gentle care of domestic animals. Early German settlers in Pennsylvania spent more on their barns than they did on their homes. There was as much powwowing and folk remedies for horses and cattle as for human beings. In addition, handbooks, printed in German, taught the farmer how to take care of sick cattle. Many, however, preferred to depend on the traditional folk remedies and practices.

Because they knew how to handle animals, many Pennsylvania Dutch farmers became mule drivers and mule bosses in the mines. They carried folk remedies from the farm to the mine mule stable. Some of the mining companies' graduate veterinarians were Pennsylvania Dutch. One of them, Dr. Irvin C. Newhart, was chief of the

veterinary department of the Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company for many years.

Another graduate veterinarian, Dr. Fred L. Herring of Pine Grove, had twelve years' experience treating sick and injured mine mules. I asked him what diseases were common among mine mules.

"Very few diseases, mostly injuries," he replied. "They got banged up, you know. A coal car not properly spragged would run into their hind legs and cut them all to ribbons, or they would come in contact with sharp rocks or coal and get cut up that way. They would be bruised if their harnesses or collars did not fit properly. Maybe there was a sadist among the mule drivers who just jerked on the bridle and opened up the corners of the jaws and the lip. Infections developed from penetrating wounds. Lockjaw was not uncommon. Mules also suffered from rheumatism because they worked in damp mines. Their teeth gave them trouble.

"As a rule, the only time they came up and saw daylight in the better grade mines was when they were crippled or badly injured. The rest of the time they were in perpetual darkness. It must have been awfully depressing for them. It's no wonder they sometimes went insane.

"How did they react to their surroundings? Not too kindly. They wouldn't work. Every chance they had they would take a side kick at you. They could take that coat off of you or a section of muscle so cleanly you wouldn't know what hit you. They were powerful. They often balked.

"There are four ways in which a mule is capable of inflicting punishment on man: biting, kicking, striking and trodding.

"Mules grow older than horses, as a rule, because they are more careful in their diet. There's one thing about a horse. A horse'll gorge himself until he gets the colic and kicks the bucket. A mule is smart. He'll eat so much and leave. I only saw one mule that killed himself by overeating. I think he got that from his mother. He didn't get it from his father. His father was a jackass. His mother was a horse, you know, a mare. A jackass is the papa and a horse mare is the mama."

Dr. Herring is not only a native of the West End but a descendent of early German settlers. He can speak the Pennsylvania Dutch dialect. He has a fine sense of humor and a feeling for folklore, especially that phase of it that embraces folk remedies and practices in animal care.

Some of Dr. Herring's anecdotes follow:

When Doc Shafer [who practiced veterinary medicine in the horse-and-buggy days when no state license was required, and quacks had a field day] went out on a case he took two bottles of liquor along; one for going and one for the return trip. On the way home he didn't have to drive. The horse brought him home safely as a rule.

A certain farmer had trouble delivering a litter of pigs, and so he called Doc Shafer who arrived without his surgical instruments. He asked for a bucket handle to use in the delivery operation. Then he started to go into the pig pen, but he was so drunk he couldn't locate the sow, so the farmer chased him off the property. "He couldn't find the sow, and so how was he to take the piglets?" said the farmer.

In another case, Doc Shafer made several trips to a farm to treat a sick cow. So the farmer says, "Doc, how much do I owe you?"

Doc looks up and he says, "Three times here, a bottle full of smear, and a half day foolin' around—five dollars."

Once Doc Shafer visited Old Eli Miller's farm. Old Eli's cow was sick. Doc says, "I can't treat this cow."

"Why can't you treat this cow?"

"Why she's got hollow horns. She's a moony cow. I can't do anything here."

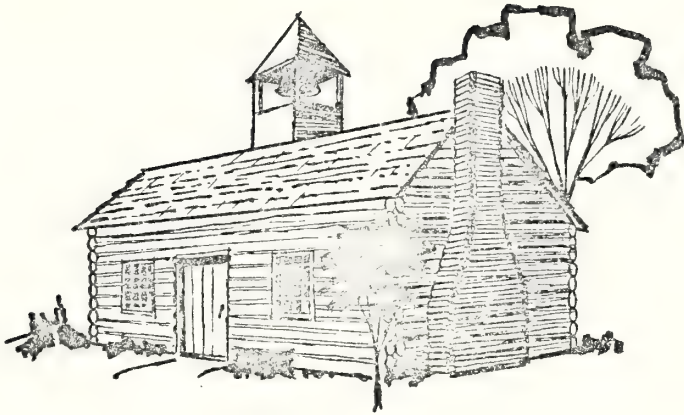
See, a moony cow has no horns. But he diagnosed that she had hollow horns. Well, all cows have hollow horns. But, you see, when a cow got off feed, or she'd lose her cud and have indigestion or something like that, the quacks would take an auger and they'd bore a hole in the horn, and blow red pepper in. It would almost drive the poor animal crazy, you know, and she'd forget her indigestion. That's quackery, boy.

Or they'd say the cow had "wolf in the tail." I used to run into that all the time when I started practicing in this section. Well, I was young and new at it. I used to give the farmers a scientific explanation until I got smart and said, "Yes, she's got a real heavy dose of 'wolf in the tail'." But I would treat her scientifically the way she should be treated for indigestion, for peritonitis, or whatever it was. I treated the case with modern technique though I called it "wolf in the tail." I wouldn't have an argument. I didn't have to stand there and explain half a day that there was no such thing as wolf in the tail.

By "wolf in the tail" the farmers meant decalcification, which sometimes resulted in the tail falling off. They would take the tail and give it one big gash and rub salt in it. Before that the tail would hang limber, but after the salt treatment the tail would switch around. That made them think that they had effected a cure, you know. Sometimes I think medicine was simpler years ago than it is nowadays. I know that science has helped us much, but the old-timers had cures, too. They used their own cures; yep, kill or cure. And I suppose they were just as happy.

Now for a final story about Doc Shafer. My grandfather told it to me. Doc Shafer visited the old Tobias place one time, but he hadn't brought along any medicine with which to treat the sick cow. "Boys," he says, "I don't have the stuff along. You'll have to go to Theodore Barr's apothecary shop [in Pine Grove] and get it. I'll write the prescription here on the gate."

There was a wooden gate nearby and on that he wrote his prescription. When he was gone, the Tobias boys looked at the gate from several angles, but they couldn't read it. So they unhooked the gate and carried it to the apothecary. Old Theodore Barr read it off the gate.²⁴



16

RELIGIOUS LORE

A MINER'S PRAYER

O Lord after I have worked my last shift and come out of the earth and have placed my feet on Thy footstool, let me use the lamp of prudence, faith, hope and charity. From now on till I will be called to sign my last pay roll, make all the cables in the machinery strong with Thy love. Supply all the gangways, slopes and chambers with the pure air of Thy grace and let the light of hope be my guidance, and when my last picking and shoveling is done, may my last car be full of Thy grace and give me the Holy Bible for my last shift, so that Thou, the General Superintendent of all the collieries can say: "Well done, thou good and faithful miner, come and sign the pay roll and receive the check of eternal happiness." Amen.

THE ABOVE IS A TRANSCRIPT OF A FRAMED BROADSIDE HANGING ON THE wall of the Young Men's Club of Tremont. It has been displayed there as long as any of the members can remember, and none of them is "young" anymore. Above the title, "A Miner's Prayer," is a picture of a coal miner sitting in a chair. He is wearing a cloth cap with an open torch miner's lamp and long boots typical of those worn by miners at the turn of the century. Albert Kutzer, Post-

master of Tremont, first called this unique document to my attention, and he recorded the text in his office on August 15, 1957.

I tried to determine whether this prayer was in oral circulation at one time, but could find no confirmation. There are not too many veteran miners around anymore who would have firsthand knowledge of the fact. Broadsides of "A Miner's Prayer" were printed in English and German and peddled from house to house by itinerant agents who charged twenty-five cents a copy. C. Erb of York was the printer.¹

Presumably, many West End homes had "A Miner's Prayer" on their walls. Also displayed was the *Himmelsbrief* (Letter from Heaven). This talismanic document was widely circulated in the form of broadsides. Copies were either hung on a wall or preserved in the family Bible. There are several of these letters in circulation around the world. The Pennsylvania Dutch favorite opens as follows: "A Letter written by God Himself and left down at Magdeburg [Germany, 1783]. It was written in golden letters and sent by God through an angel."

The document commands abstaining from work on Sunday and advises going to church. It expresses disapproval of "sensualities and desire." It urges children to honor their fathers and mothers. There is a command against adornment of the face and wearing of "strange hair," a barb apparently aimed at the women. It offers protection from harm and disaster to those who preserve the letter.²

Engaged in a hazardous occupation, the West End miner believed in signs, and many workers carried one kind of talisman or another which they believed gave them protection from unseen dangers in the mine. The late Peter M. Laux, also known as "Uncle Pete," of Tremont, an amateur powwower whom I first met in 1931, told me that upon request he would give a fellow miner a slip of paper on which he wrote four lines, the first and fourth ending in a blank, where the client wrote his name—

Jesus walketh with _____
He is my Head,
I am His limb,
Therefore, Jesus walketh with _____³

Laux said that the miners he assisted regarded this talisman as an expression of faith in God who would protect them from injury or death in the mines.

Edith Patterson recalls that many years ago she and a Pennsylvania Dutch author were taken by the late Claude W. Unger of Pottsville to view real hex signs on a Pennsylvania Dutch barn in

Schuylkill County. These signs were not painted on the outside "for fancy" as were those in Lehigh and Berks Counties. They were crudely-carved crosses accompanied by the phrase, "In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost." The carvings were on the overhang and on doors leading to the stalls. They were the work of an amateur, the farmer himself, perhaps, invoking the blessing of the Holy Trinity on his cattle.⁴

Did anthracite miners in the West End carve similar symbols on the wooden props in the mine? It is too late to prove it because those mines are all under water.

RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND

The 1830's and '40's saw in the United States the rise of the Industrial Revolution, the westward migration, the beginning of mass immigration from Europe, and other developments that shook the political, social, and economic equilibrium of the young republic. One result was the spread of rampant individualism charged with considerable emotionalism. Organized religion could not escape the heavy fall-out from these profoundly disturbing influences. Protestant denominations—Presbyterian, Episcopalian, Lutheran, and German Reformed, among others—were torn by internal strife.

Pennsylvania Dutchland became a battleground of conflicting forces within its two principal denominations, Lutheran and Reformed, to which most of the Pennsylvania Dutch anthracite miners belonged. One wing of Lutherans advocated Americanization, emphasizing an English divine service and a liberal interpretation of the Augsburg Confession, while another insisted on having its services in German, the language of their fathers, and on adhering strictly to the confession of faith.

There was a similar schism between liberal and conservative wings in the German Reformed Church. The language controversy loomed large in both denominations. Many congregations lost members who withdrew to build churches of their own where they would be free to follow their path to salvation and conduct church services in English, the language of their children.

Lutheran and Reformed congregations had need of unity as they were under attack from a new movement sweeping early America, the circuit-riding revivalists—Methodists and their German-speaking coun-

terparts who founded the United Brethren in Christ and other American faiths. The horseback preachers of the "new message" inveighed against what they deemed as a general letdown of moral standards and lax gospel preaching. Generally, what the revivalists criticized as sinful conduct often were innocent pleasures through which the pioneers sought to balance the backbreaking work of building a new nation with a little fun. Like the Quakers, the revivalists proscribed dances, play-party games, card-playing, smoking, and drinking. To them the fiddle was "the devil's instrument."

The struggle offered two paths to salvation: either one is born into a denomination and remains in it until death, or one arrives at salvation by the "bush-meeting" way that called for personal conversion and a Puritan-like folkway.

The deeply-rooted Lutheran and Reformed Churches fought the revivalists tooth and nail. They closed their doors and denied their pulpits to visiting evangelists of the new message. They spoke out against them from the pulpit. They excoriated them in their denomination press, and raked them over the coals in printed broadsides. Occasionally they even adopted the revivalists' own technique to meet them on more even grounds. The struggle was bitter because for a time self-preservation was at stake.⁵

In the midst of this religious strife the pattern of "union" churches, formed early in the German settlement of Pennsylvania, appeared unaffected. Lutheran and Reformed congregations subordinated denominational differences to the task of jointly building church edifices where they worshipped on alternate Sundays.

How did this partnership work out in actual practice? The answer to this question is supplied by one of the longest Lutheran-Reformed unions, that of St. Paul's at Summer Hill, Schuylkill County. By adhering to the following simple rule, it lasted from 1782 until 1959:

If any difficulties arise in the congregations, there shall be elected Lutheran and Reformed members to settle the difficulties. No court or justice of the peace shall have anything to do with it.⁹

Also part of the religious pattern were German parochial schools supported by the Protestant churches until 1834, when Pennsylvania's public school system was enacted into law.¹⁰

The first church in the primeval forest of what is now Schuylkill County was built by Lutherans. In 1755, during the French and Indian War, German settlers built a log church in the vicinity of the present historic Red Church at Pinedale. One year later it was burned

to the ground by Indians waging war on the settlers. It was not until 1770 that a new house of worship was erected near the ashes of the one destroyed by the Indians. There has been a (Zion) Red Church on that site ever since.¹¹

The second Lutheran church in Schuylkill County, and the first one in the West End, is Jacob's Church at Exmoor, about two miles west of Pine Grove. In the winter of 1779-1780, a group of Pine Grove Township residents, most of them German and Swiss immigrants who had crossed the Blue Mountain after the end of the French and Indian War, met in Gunkle's tavern and decided to organize a church in the Swatara Valley. In the spring of 1780, men cut logs from the dense stand of trees on the tract acquired by the young congregation. These logs were hewn and a church built with them, which was dedicated May 19, 1780. The interior was crude, consisting of an earthen floor, wall-to-wall rough benches, with a wooden platform at one end of the room and a fireplace at the other. The original log church served until 1833, when it was replaced by a weatherproofed building of hewn logs. A gallery extended along the southeast and westerly sides. High on the north side was the pulpit reached by winding stairs.¹²

"Their voice was soon heard in the wildest and most barbarous corners of the land . . . where in the pauses of their labor the Cornish miners listened to the sobbing of the sea."¹³ This was said of the brothers John and Charles Wesley, George Whitefield, and others of that remarkable group of Oxford religious zealots who, early in the eighteenth century, had set out to carry religion to the masses in England. Their rules of personal conduct were so strict that they soon acquired the nickname "Methodists," and as a group they were identified as the "Holy Club" because of all the time they spent on prayer and devotional readings.¹⁴

Through fiery zeal and sheer eloquence, they converted thousands of people. Among their converts were many Cornish tin miners, and English and Welsh coal miners. Descendants of some of these early Methodists carried their faith into the anthracite region of Pennsylvania in the nineteenth century. Some who became mine bosses in the New World helped their faith by building small frame Methodist churches in various mine patches.

This occurred early in the nineteenth century. Methodist "societies" and "classes" sprang up here and there in the wake of circuit-riding preachers who studied and prayed in the saddle and preached

wherever they could—in fields, in homes, stores, and yes, even in barrooms.

One of the early Methodist sermons heard in Schuylkill County was preached by Jonathan Wynn in Pottsville in 1828. Through his efforts and those of other itinerant preachers, a permanent church was planted in Pottsville which today represents the biggest single Methodist investment in Schuylkill County.¹⁵

From Pottsville, Methodism spread out in all directions, generally following the development of the anthracite mining industry. As soon as the last nail had been hammered into the last company row house in a backwoods mine patch, a Methodist preacher appeared to preach the gospel.

In 1846, the Reverend T. A. Fehrly, a Methodist missionary, came to Pine Grove to conduct a revival. When he found only one family that professed Methodism and the rest of the population cool, the circuit-rider left in a hurry. He fared somewhat better in Tremont where there were twenty miners' homes, a general store, and Hipple's tavern. With Hipple's permission, he turned the tavern barroom into a Methodist chapel. The whiskey bottles on the bar were discreetly hidden under a white tablecloth. Nearby lay a Bible and a worn copy of the Presbyterian hymn book. Fehrly put some of the men to work building rough benches that accommodated forty men and women. The text of his sermon was: "I am not ashamed of the Gospel!" When he finished, five persons—three women and two men—came forward to become Tremont's first Methodist class. Hipple's barroom continued to serve as an improvised chapel until the spring, when the prayer service was transferred to a grove between Tremont and Donaldson.¹⁶

It was a different story in Pine Grove. The town's population was predominantly Lutheran and Reformed by inheritance and regular church attendance. On the surface it was obvious that, in Pine Grove, Methodism had no chance to grow.

Nevertheless, for a period of years Methodism developed considerable strength after Levi Miller, Sr., the West End's most influential coal baron, came to its support. Reared in the German Reformed Church, Miller had come to Pine Grove from Adamstown, Lancaster County, in the 1830's to buy Jonathan Seidel's tannery. It was not long before he branched out into anthracite mining. There were fortunes to be made out of the coal-bearing mountains to the north of Pine Grove. He decided to try his fortune. He seems to have preferred operating through partnerships. He was a partner

in several mining companies that opened and developed collieries in various parts of the West End coal field. In 1869, as head of Miller, Graeff and Company, he built the Lincoln, the West End's largest colliery. He also operated the Lower Rausch Creek Colliery, and other coal-mining properties. With Major Peter A. Filbert he owned Miller, Filbert and Company, which was the company store, the equivalent of a modern department store, where the miners bought their provisions and supplies.¹⁷

Like other coal barons of the nineteenth century, Levi Miller, Sr., was not satisfied to dominate the industrial and civic life of his community. He sought to extend his power to the sphere of religion. Unable to impose his point of view upon a majority of the German Reformed congregation, he withdrew from membership and took quite a number of sympathizers, some of them influential coal operators, with him. The dissenters were converted by German-speaking circuit-riding revivalists and formed St. Paul's Evangelical church. Levi Miller was elected class leader of this congregation. By 1843 the new congregation had raised enough money to build a new church building, and Levi Miller donated the lot for it. When a Sunday School was organized in 1851, Levi Miller was elected its superintendent. In 1864 a new brick church was built on another lot donated by Levi Miller.¹⁸

In 1846, the Reverend Christian Kreider, one of the great itinerant preachers of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, a revivalist group, conducted a revival in the storeroom adjoining Paul Barr's drugstore in Pine Grove. The meetings extended over a period of several weeks and resulted in many conversions. A class was organized with Paul Barr as leader, and in 1847 it was recognized by the East Pennsylvania Conference as a charge of that denomination. Barr and most of the members of this new congregation were drawn from St. Paul's Evangelical Church. Levi Miller does not appear to have been among these dissenters.¹⁹

He was, however, the leader of a major schism that developed in St. Paul's Evangelical Church in 1876. This time he was determined to make a clean break with his religious background. Methodist circuit riders had been unable to make a dent in Pine Grove. Levi Miller undertook to do it for them. At the first meeting on April 20, 1876, sixty-six persons joined a new Methodist congregation.²⁰

As Miller went along with his plans to prepare the spiritual soil in which Methodism might flourish in Pine Grove, there was an up-

roar in the community. He was taking members away not only from St. Paul's Evangelical, but also from the other churches.

Miller donated a valuable parcel of land at Mill and Tulpehocken Streets as a site for a Methodist Church building. He also assumed responsibility for raising the money to build a red brick church of Gothic style architecture at an estimated cost of \$25,000.²¹

The congregation accepted Miller's generous offer without knowing in advance that their benefactor had planned to make his mine-workers contribute a large share of the money. There were several hundred of them on the payrolls of Lincoln and Lower Rausch Creek Collieries. Miller was quite an ingenious promoter! He conceived a plan under which each mineworker would pay for a brick in the new church building, on a voluntary basis, he said, in amounts they could afford. But on payday the workers found to their dismay that Miller had deducted sums ranging from five dollars to twenty-five dollars, each "voluntary" deduction based on what Miller thought the worker should contribute.

The workers felt betrayed. The majority were Pennsylvania Dutch, reared in the Lutheran and Reformed faiths. Many did not even live in Pine Grove, their homes scattered over the Swatara Valley. Although angry, they could not strike, as they had lost their union, the Workingmen's Benevolent Association, in the long strike of 1875.

After the church was completed, the miners would stand across the street and facetiously try to identify one another's bricks. Long afterward, the edifice was known as the "miners' church" because of their financial contribution.

Levi Miller, Sr., was a determined fellow. To fill the church every Sunday, he put the pressure on those of his employees living in Pine Grove to attend the Methodist service whether they were members or not, and regardless of membership in other churches. The miners were reluctant to attend for a social as well as a religious reason. They felt ill at ease sitting on plush pews and having to rub elbows with some of the town's most socially prominent families—the Millers, the Graeffs, the Filberts, the James L. Nuttings, and others.

Said one informant:

Now my father told me the story that he started to work at the Miller, Filbert and Company store when he was sixteen years of age, and he was made to take a part in the [Methodist] church and sing in the choir. He had a very good bass voice, and the choir leader was the daughter of Levi Miller, who was a very fine

woman and was liked by everyone. My father was very happy to sing in the choir, but still the fact that he was made to do it went against his grain because both his father and mother were Lutherans, his father being active in his church at the time.

And there were many other people that had to attend the Methodist Church even though they belonged to other churches.²²

The Methodist Church had a long-range plan to convert the miners' children to their faith. To this end they laid great stress on their Sunday School. Over a period of years, the Sunday School was the second largest in Pine Grove with more than two hundred members. They had a library that had more than one thousand books. Children were invited to borrow books for home reading.²³

Nevertheless, the Methodists were unable to make a permanent place for themselves in Pine Grove. While regular Sunday attendance drew near-capacity attendance, there was disappointing progress in terms of paid membership. The hope that the Methodist Church might obtain members from among those who had passed through its Sunday School was not fulfilled. Many of these young men and women simply went back to their fathers' churches.

The death of Levi Miller, Sr., in 1887 removed the church's strongest pillar. The coal baron's two sons, Daniel Miller and Levi Miller, Jr., followed in their father's footsteps. But in the words of an elderly informant, "the boys didn't have the ingenuity what their father had."²⁴

Levi Miller, Sr., left a trust fund to provide for the church's maintenance and to pay part of the minister's salary. But during the Depression the investments dried up and the trust fund shrank to the disappearing point.

The Pine Grove Methodist Church finally closed its doors in 1950 "because they didn't have enough people to keep the thing going."²⁵ A former officer of the church is authority for the statement that there were "perhaps a dozen" members at the time of closing.

HOW THEY OBSERVED HOLIDAYS

Churches played a significant role in the lives of their members in the West End. From cradle to grave, churches guided the people in the path of righteousness, shared their moments of happiness and comforted them in time of sorrow. The church performed baptisms,

weddings, and funerals; and it also had considerable influence over social activities outside the church edifice.

The principal holidays celebrated by Pennsylvania Dutch mine-workers in the West End were tied to the churches by ritual or tradition, except for Memorial Day and Independence Day.

Christmas was the most important religious holiday of the year. It was characterized by good cheer, warm friendships, family reunions, song and merry laughter, the glitter of Christmas tree tinsel, and the appetizing aroma floating through the house from the kitchen.

In early times, Christmas was observed as a strict church holy day. Around 1870 the character of the observance began to change in Lutheran and Reformed churches.²⁶ From then on, a lighter note crept into the observance and children held the center of the stage. Every church in Pine Grove owned a Santa Claus suit and each congregation had a Christmas program in which the traditional jolly fat man had a featured role. On the Sunday before Christmas or on Christmas Sunday, Santa Claus would distribute packages containing oranges and candy to the Sunday School pupils.²⁷

Before Santa Claus had crystallized as a symbol, Pennsylvania Dutch children looked forward eagerly to visits from Kriss Kringle—*Christ-kindlein* (the little Christ Child). Kriss Kringle was a Christmas lore character that eighteenth-century settlers in Pennsylvania had brought over from Germany. Boys and girls who had been good and had said their prayers built their hopes of reward around him, and Kriss Kringle never disappointed them. He always appeared on Christmas Eve to distribute gifts.

Related to this legend was the one about St. Nicholas whom the Dutch settlers of New York had brought over from the Netherlands. St. Nicholas Day falls on the sixth of December. On that night, good old St. Nick, carrying a bagful of toys, let himself down chimneys into homes to bring presents to deserving children. Through the years, the legends of Kriss Kringle and St. Nicholas grew together and from the combination there emerged the Santa Claus of the present.²⁸

Prior to this merger, Kriss Kringle had a companion, Belsnickel, who had also come from German folklore. Dressed in a grotesque costume and speaking in a gruff voice, he would ask the children for an accounting of their past behavior. Those who had behaved well (according to their own word) were rewarded with gifts out of a bag. It was long customary for fathers of children to masquerade as Belsnickel, but the role gradually fell to groups of young men.

They would go from house to house demanding an accounting from children. Then they put on a skit and distributed gifts.²⁹

The whole Christmas week was observed more or less as a holiday, especially by young men and women. There was skating at the canal basin, sleighing parties, dances, and special suppers, all on a social calendar that reached a climax with a mummers' parade on New Year's Day.

Christmas inspired much lore. One of the best-known legends is that on Christmas Eve, at the stroke of twelve, cattle in the barn drop to their knees in adoration of the Lord and begin talking with one another. A properly sanctified human being, it was believed, could hear this talk, but trying to overhear it would be taking a chance of being struck dead.³⁰

The Christmas *Putz*, popular in Lehigh and Berks Counties, was unknown in this outpost of Pennsylvania Dutchland. I asked one of my Pine Grove informants, a lifelong resident, whether there had been *Putzes* in the West End and he did not know what I was talking about. After I had explained that a *Putz*, derived from the German *putzen*, to decorate, was a form of decoration depicting the nativity scene and other biblical episodes associated with the birth of Jesus, he said that only a few of such displays had appeared in Pine Grove in recent years.³¹

Several years ago a truck was driven through the streets of Valley View on New Year's Eve; the driver, talking in the Dutch dialect through a loud-speaker, wished his fellow townsmen a Happy New Year.³²

This was a modern version of an old Pennsylvania Dutch custom—shooting in the new year. The shooters, mostly young men, would assemble in one of the homes to await the coming of the new year. One minute after midnight, they rushed out into the dark streets firing pistols, rifles, and other weapons, as church bells rang. The shooters then walked from house to house. Pausing in front of a home, they would call out the householder's name, and when he responded they would break into a hymn. This was followed by a young man reciting a new year's wish in German. They were then invited to come in for drinks and food.

The new year ushered in church revivals extending through the penitential season of Lent that prepared the people for the solemn services of Holy Week and Easter.

Shrove Tuesday, preceding Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent, was widely observed. The custom of baking *Fastnachts* (doughnuts),

which were eaten with molasses and coffee, was general. In many churches women raised money for their religious organizations by baking and selling doughnuts. Shrove Tuesday morning was always noisy at home as children sought to get out of bed and dress early, for tradition held that the last one out of bed was the *Fastnacht* and had to perform an unpleasant chore.

Outside of Pennsylvania Dutchland, Shrove Tuesday is observed as Pancake Day, a custom reaching back to medieval England. Men's and women's organizations served pancake suppers to the public to raise funds for their respective churches.

Ash Wednesday marked the beginning of Lent. Catholic and some Protestant churches held special services. Ashes, symbolic of penitence, were put on the foreheads of the faithful in all Catholic Churches.

Said a Pennsylvania Dutch woman: "The Dutchman of years ago would ash his livestock on Ash Wednesday in order to keep them free of lice for the year."³³

Good Friday found the West End coal mines shut tight to allow miners, Protestant and Catholic, to attend church services. Lutheran and Reformed churches usually held union services from twelve noon to three o'clock in which choirs and pastors took turns. As fish was generally eaten on this day, Good Friday saw much fishing in the Swatara Creek and other streams. The Amish and some old people of other denominations denied themselves breakfast on Good Friday.

Easter Sunday was a solemn holiday in the church calendar. This was the day when the catechumens of the Reformed and Lutheran denominations became members of the church and took their first communion. In the other churches, girls in white dresses and boys in their first pair of long trousers were confirmed.³⁴

For children, Easter was symbolized by the Easter rabbit and the colored eggs it laid. The Easter rabbit is another German folk character introduced in America by the Pennsylvania Dutch.³⁵

On Saturday preceding Easter Sunday, Pennsylvania Dutch kitchens, especially those in rural areas, were busy with the task of hard-boiling hens' eggs and coloring them by boiling them in onion skins.³⁶ On Easter Eve, children prepared nests in which they hoped the bunny would deposit colored eggs and gifts. Parents would hide these nests around the house or out in the yard, and on Easter morning their children would engage in a hunt to find them. This was a source of much fun.

Many years ago Pennsylvania Dutch boys played an Easter game

called "picking eggs," or "picking for keeps." Boys of St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Pine Grove would come to Sunday School with pockets bulging with hard-boiled eggs. They would bump each other's eggs with the object of breaking the shells. The boy whose egg shell remained intact was the winner of the other's eggs. Some boys proved skillful at the game and accumulated many hard-boiled eggs, with which they gorged themselves. The resultant belly-ache demanded relief from Mom's folk medicine shelf.³⁷

Ascension Day is universally observed by coal miners, even in Protestant England. The belief is that one courts disaster in the mines by working on this holiday. Miners reason that their occupation is dangerous enough without making it more so by defying tradition.

Early in the history of the West End, the Pennsylvania Dutch people believed that fish came up the Swatara Creek and other streams on Ascension Day. So this holiday was dedicated to fishing, whole families participating in the sport. This custom continued until the fish were killed off by the black sulphurous waste water that was poured into the creek from the collieries.

Sewing was to be avoided on Ascension Day. This belief has such a strong hold on the people of the West End that even today women working in the textile mills avoid the needle and some take the day off. One folk belief is that if you sew on Ascension Day, you will have to rip the stitches out with your nose in the hereafter. Another belief is that lightning will strike anything you work on.

There was a time when Ascension Day was observed universally throughout Pennsylvania Dutchland with a morning church worship. As if to keep green the memory of this religious observance, there is a church in northern Schuylkill County that holds only one service a year—on Ascension Day. This is the White Church in Ringtown Valley, about a mile east of Ringtown Borough. The Lutheran and Reformed faiths join in this annual service, each taking its turn on alternate years. The church was dedicated in 1842 and is maintained in good repair and repainted frequently. Its side doors are open to visitors all year round. Its old-fashioned pulpit reached by a winding stair, its hanging kerosene lamps, straight-backed pews, and coal stoves in the aisles are relics of pre-Civil War days.³⁸

St. Patrick's Day, March 17, sacred to Irish Catholics, was not observed by the Pennsylvania Dutch. Yet it was not without some significance to them. Said one informant: "The Dutchman of years ago would have walked around the inside of his garden fence three times

before nine o'clock in the morning on St. Patrick's Day to keep the moles out of the garden."

St. Patrick's Day was celebrated with a big dance. This posed a problem to a man on the night shift. The only way he could get off to attend the ball was to get a non-Catholic, sometimes a Pennsylvania Dutchman, to take his place. A young Irishman, Frank Bambrick, worked on March 16, 1904, in the Pine Knot Colliery in the Heckscherville Valley, near Pottsville, so he would be free to take his fiancée to the St. Patrick's Day ball the following night. The ground near the head of the shaft was icy; Bambrick slipped, and fell twelve hundred feet down the shaft to a horrible death.³⁹

December 4 is the name day of St. Barbara, protector of miners. About half a century ago, Italian Catholic miners built a church in Minersville and named it for this saint. Otherwise not nearly as much attention is paid to St. Barbara in the anthracite region as in European coal fields. Even today miners in West Germany receive extra rations to celebrate St. Barbara's Day. Polish miners affectionately call St. Barbara "Barburka." The Communist government has turned the holiday to its own benefit. On this day, government and Communist party leaders come to Katowice, center of the Polish coal mining district. They mingle with the miners and their families at meetings, balls, and receptions; stomp on the dance floor with pretty girls dressed in folk costumes; award bonuses to miners who have produced the most coal within a given time limit; and release balloons containing prize coupons for radios and new clothes.⁴⁰

GROUND-HOG DAY

Each year on ground-hog day, February 2, Americans pause in their labors long enough to find out whether the ground hog or, more accurately, the woodchuck (*Marmota monax*) has seen his shadow. If he has, then they are resigned to face six more weeks of winter.

This is a national tradition, but nowhere is there as much attention paid to, and as much wholesome fun derived from, this tradition as in the Pennsylvania Dutch counties, including Schuylkill. In the Palatinate, Germany, the ancestors of the Pennsylvania Dutch associated a similar belief with the *Dachs*, a carnivorous animal (*Meles taxus*) that in general appearance, burrowing habits, and food pref-

erences resembles the American badger. For hunting the badger, the Germans bred a special breed of dog, the *Dachshund*, which is popular even in America.

When the eighteenth-century Germans settled in southeastern Pennsylvania, they found no badgers, but woodchucks roamed the fields and hillsides. Unlike the badger, the woodchuck is a vegetarian and lives off his neighboring farmers' alfalfa, fruits, and vegetables. Perhaps because it had the same hibernating habits, the German settlers transferred their tradition about the German *Dachs* to the ground hog, namely, that Candlemas Day, February 2, is the day of the ground hog's coming-out party.

West End's authority on ground-hog day is J. Hampton Haldeman, Pine Grove pharmacist, who has been oracle, spokesman, and friend of the ground hog for, lo! these many years. Here is what he said on the subject in the back room of his drugstore:

Ground hog is the common English name; *Grundsaw* is the Pennsylvania Dutch name; but woodchuck is the true, official name. The only name for the critter is woodchuck. February the second, this animal which has been hibernating for the past several months, comes out of a hole in the ground, and looks around. If it sees its shadow it immediately turns back into its abode, meaning that we're going to have six more weeks of winter. For many years I've been studying this honest American animal, and it's never failed yet.

How did I first become interested? Well, this is a true story what I'm going to relate. I'm going to go back about fifty years. At that time I heard my father discussing politics and other matters with a companion, and later he mentioned about tomorrow being ground-hog day.

I was only a child then, but I decided to play hookey from school the following morning, and watch this ground hog. I got up real early and, to my amazement, I discovered a ground hog coming out of the hole about a quarter to eight.

I made the terrible mistake of returning home before eleven o'clock; school left out at eleven. I came home at ten. My father asked why I was home so early from school. I informed him that I went to look for the ground hog. My dad did not lick me. He did not scold me. He merely asked me, "Did you see the ground hog?" I said, "Yes, I did." He inquired, "Did it see its shadow?" I told him, "Yes, it did."

And I also predicted at that time that we were going to have a blizzard. Well, I was in a sweat for several weeks, but we got our blizzard.

Ever since then I've been predicting the weather on February the

second. I'm not crowing or bragging, but my score has been one hundred per cent accurate.⁴¹

Many years ago the Slumbering Ground Hog Lodge was organized in Quarryville, Lancaster County. With mock dignity and tongue-in-cheek, attired in white robes and high silk hats and swinging canes, the brothers walk to the main entrance of Br'er Ground Hog's burrow. Then they walk back to town to report whether the ground hog saw his shadow or not.

A similar group is the Punxsutawney Ground Hog Club in Punxsutawney, Jefferson County. About dawn on the day of days, members climb Gobbler's Knob overlooking the town and wait for the animal to come out of his hole in the ground. Then, upon returning to town, they announce the news, and folks prepare accordingly. That evening a dinner is held in honor of the ground hog.

The most widespread organization honoring the ground hog each year is the one with lodges named for the principal streams in Pennsylvania Dutchland. The founding lodge is Allentown's *Grundsaw Lotch Nummer Ains on da Lechaw* (Ground Hog Lodge Number One on the Lehigh). It was founded in 1934 by Rev. Thomas R. Brendle, dean of Pennsylvania Dutch folklorists, and the late William ("Pumpnickle Bill") Troxell, Dutch dialect columnist of the Allentown *Morning Call*.

This was part of a broad program of Pennsylvania Dutch cultural revival of which Troxell and Brendle were the leaders. The idea caught on quickly and other lodges were organized, each named for a stream in a different part of Pennsylvania Dutchland. For example, in the West End it is the Pine Grove Lodge Number Five on the Swatara (Creek).

Each lodge has a weather forecaster, among other officers, whose duty it is to attempt to make contact with Br'er Ground Hog early in the morning of February 2 and report back to the lodge that evening when an annual dinner is held. The lodges have strict rules to preserve the Dutch dialect and folklore. For example, English is *verboden*. Only Pennsylvania Dutch may be spoken. Those violating this rule must pay a fine, which is donated to charity. Only Pennsylvania Dutch folk songs are sung and traditional Dutch dishes are served. This is the one night of the year when Dutch dialect speakers try to outdo themselves in showmanship. The atmosphere is gay and festive.⁴²

Halloween was "hell night" in the West End. In Pine Grove,

for example, teenagers of several generations ago were under firm parental discipline except for Halloween when they broke through all restraints. It usually took them several days to gratify their compulsive destructiveness. Before they were through, the adult community had been turned topsy-turvy.

While their older brothers and sisters attended a masquerade ball, the younger element went berserk. They filled the air with shrill, ear-splitting noises, rang doorbells, hurled corn at windows and rotten tomatoes at doors.

Anything portable that was not securely nailed down, well hidden, or locked up was fair game for these old-time juvenile delinquents for a day. They would unhook gates and run off with them. Unguarded buggies and light-weight wagons were taken apart, dragged to a barn roof, reassembled, and left there. They also made off with porch steps, benches, chairs, and swings, which, with other property, were dumped at the old canal and towpath. Amid great confusion, owners gathered there to identify and claim their stolen property and cart it home if it had not been destroyed or burned in a bonfire.

What evoked the most anguished cries from adults, however, was the boys upsetting outhouses. The more they knocked down, the happier they seemed to be, and this was far from amusing to those hapless beings who happened to be caught in them. In a day when all but the wealthier families lacked indoor bathrooms, one can understand why adults took a dim view of this Halloween trick.

But all this destruction is a thing of the past. About 1925, Pine Grove's community leaders decided that something should be done to entertain the children on Halloween to keep them out of mischief. That marked the beginning of the annual Halloween parade, which is still a big event.⁴³

ATTITUDE TOWARD DEATH—FUNERAL CUSTOMS

The Pennsylvania Dutch of the West End had a fatalistic attitude toward death. They believed that the number of years one lived was determined by God, and when a person had lived his allotted time he would die either in bed or down below at the mine work face. This fatalism took the fear out of danger and led to unnecessary risks. One heard much talk about death, especially among elderly people.

Edith Patterson recalls a conversation with an aged Pennsylvania Dutch woman in Pottsville. "One day I was standing with her," she said, "under the very apple tree where she had once reproached me for taking some twigs off for blossoms instead of letting them grow into little green apples. There were several of us talking about this and that when the conversation somehow turned to the subject of death. 'Ach, yah, and now I've got to go through all that yet,' she sighed."

Miss Patterson, while house hunting years ago, was accompanied by another Dutch woman. After they had inspected a certain house from attic to cellar and had found it to their liking, they stepped out the front door. Her companion looked back at the very narrow hall entrance with this comment: "Edith, I don't see how you'd get a corpse out of this house."

She was the same woman who once told Miss Patterson that she had kept a black felt mourning dress for forty years for her husband's funeral because she thought he was in delicate health and might die any day.

The Pennsylvania Dutch dialect makes a distinction between the death of a human being and an animal, as pointed out by Thomas R. Brendle and Claude W. Unger in their collection, *Folk Medicine of the Pennsylvania Germans*:

In the English language we refer to the death of a human being and of an animal with the same words, "he or it died." But in our dialect we make a distinction which preserves the belief that man possessing a soul dies differently from a soulless animal. A human being dies—*r scharbt*; a horse expires—*geht dod*; a dog perishes—*verreckt*. Only in rare instances when we would convey the impression that unusual circumstances attended a person's death do we use the words *dod gange* or *verrecke*.⁴⁴

To prepare for death was considered part of a frugal way of life. Many miners belonged to fraternal organizations that paid sick and death benefits. Among the stronger fraternities in Pine Grove were the Grand Army of the Republic, the Patriotic Order of Sons of America, Independent Order of Odd Fellows, and Redmen. Some fraternal lodges paid two or three dollars a week to sick and unemployed members and from one hundred to two hundred dollars toward funeral expenses in case of death. Benefits increased by belonging to several lodges simultaneously.

There was another way—make the industry pay for injuries and

deaths. Even prior to the Civil War, Schuylkill County miners had lobbied in Harrisburg for state laws to provide for the relief of injured miners or the families of those who were killed while at work in coal mines. Sometimes a bill died in committee, sometimes one was lost on the floor of the house or senate, and sometimes a bill passed by the legislature was vetoed by the governor; but there was progress through the years as the people began to understand the peculiar problems of the anthracite industry. A State Workmen's Compensation Act was finally passed in 1915. After the United Mine Workers of America became established in the anthracite industry, miners were in a much stronger position to demand safer working conditions and provisions for their families when they were killed. Some of the larger mining companies had relief funds to which both miners and operators contributed.⁴⁵

A cradle may bring cares but a corpse more so, according to an old Pennsylvania Dutch proverb. In the old days before undertaking became a business, the whole community showed concern for a bereaved family. The various tasks now the responsibility of an undertaker were performed by neighbors at little or no cost to the bereaved family. A definite routine was followed. After a physician had pronounced a person dead, the deceased's immediate family and the minister were notified. The church bell tolled to inform the entire community. In Pine Grove, St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church rang as many times as the years of the deceased. Men and women dropped what they were doing and rushed out on the streets asking one another, "Who died? Who died?" In twenty minutes or less, word was all over town.

Preparation of the body, known in the Dutch dialect as *ausleje*,⁴⁶ or "laying the body out," was often entrusted to a religious person. The body was washed and efforts made to preserve it until burial; the same person dressed the corpse for viewing. Early in the German settlement of Schuylkill County, deep cool sod and bagfuls of salt were used to keep the corpse from deteriorating. In a later period, cloths soaked in brandy were applied, but they required frequent changes. It was considered an honor for an engaged couple to attend to this task through the night. Then came the icebox, which was a big improvement over the other two methods; but the sound of dripping water in the still of the night as the ice melted was eery and unnerving to those who sat up. It was once customary for two young

men and two young women to maintain a watch in a room next to the corpse,⁴⁷ but there was no wake such as prevailed among Irish Catholic families.

Gravediggers, pallbearers, and transportation to and from the cemetery were free to the bereaved family. The only one who charged was the coffinmaker who measured the corpse, and built a coffin to fit; he received a nominal fee—five dollars, as a rule—for the wood and labor.

In Pine Grove the interval between death and burial usually was four days. Said an informant:

A funeral was a big thing around here in the old days. If you were even a third or fourth cousin, you tried to get to the funeral because that was the proper thing to do. An important part of a funeral service was the church choir. When I was in high school I had a pretty good bass voice and sang in our church choir. Whenever there was a funeral our choir was engaged and my high school principal allowed me to take an hour or two of an afternoon to sing with the rest of the choir. If a funeral happened to be held in the country, we rode on a spring wagon loaned us by one of the local stores. Hymns most in demand were those suggesting passage from this life into the next, and they were sung in English. A favorite was "I Come To Thee."

They would bring the corpse into the church and set the coffin down in front of the railing. The church was nearly always filled to capacity. Immediate members of the bereaved family occupied the amen pews up in front from where would come sounds of sobbing.

The preacher stood above the corpse as he preached his sermon. In those days sermons were long and emotional. Some preachers played on the people's feelings, with the result that there would be much weeping and wailing, and some women became hysterical.⁴⁸

It was once customary for men seated in the mourners' pews to wear their hats during a funeral service. This custom was discussed by a panel of speakers at the annual meeting of the Pennsylvania German Society at The Pennsylvania State University in 1955.

After the deceased had been laid away in the cemetery, all who had come to the funeral were invited to the bereaved family's home for a full-course dinner. At some funerals it required three or four sittings to feed all the company. Incidentally, the meals were cooked and served by women of the neighborhood, who took at least two days to "redd up" the house and prepare the post-funeral dinner. Cold boiled ham and chicken were two favorite meats served at old-

time funerals. The most popular pie was raisin, which came to be called "funeral pie" because it was served so often. Economy dictated the choice of raisins because they were the cheapest fruit.⁴⁹

Clauser's Church cemetery near Llewellyn is a reminder of the old Pennsylvania Dutch custom of denying burial within a church graveyard to suicides; generally, a suicide's body was interred outside the cemetery wall. Clauser's is a typical country church standing in a grove of pines, its tall white pillars contrasting pleasantly with its red brick walls. The church is named for a member of the Clauser family who donated the land a long time ago. In making the gift the donor laid down a strict condition: no suicides were to be buried there. According to folklore, there is a lone grave outside Clauser's Church cemetery. The old local legend with an ironic twist has it that sleeping there is none other than the donor of the land, or maybe one of his immediate descendants.⁵⁰

"Lining out" was a widespread custom in pioneer days, and some believe that, like so many other early American customs, it may have originated among the frugal Pennsylvania Dutch. Anyway, we suppose that lining out was practiced in Schuylkill County. Albert Kaer, blind violinist, and one of Pottsville's leading musicians, says that his grandfather Schertle, who died in the 1880's, often spoke and sang this yarn of the "lined-out hymn" to his children, including Kaer's mother. Edith Patterson, Pottsville librarian, knew a version that circulated in Ohio, and fragments of which remain in her memory. Mrs. H. O. Bechtel, wife of a retired Schuylkill County judge, says that she has been telling the story for many years.

Lining out grew out of a pioneer environment when hymn books were scarce. In many congregations only the minister owned a hymnal, and he would "line out," or read a line, and the congregation would follow by singing it. As both texts and tunes were disseminated orally, lining out was part of the folklore tradition.

In this spoken-and-sung humorous tale, a congregation had become so accustomed to singing their minister's spoken words that once they did it automatically when he was simply making a factual statement. On that day the old minister got up to "raise the tune," and was obliged to explain to his flock that he was having trouble reading the words in the hymnal without his glasses, which he had left at home.

"In his best ministerial diction," writes Miss Patterson, "he said, 'Mine eyes are dim,' and they sang that, too. Then my version went on with, 'I think I see my brother's dog,' and they sang, 'A-coming through the field,' meaning that with the dog in sight, the brother bringing the minister's glasses could not be far behind."

Albert Kaer remembers a fragment of the Pennsylvania Dutch version circulating in Schuylkill County:

Da kummt mein brudder, Chon,

Here comes my brother, John
I guess he fetches dem along.

As the congregation continues singing what was only an explanation, the aged preacher cries out in frustration:

You fools, vy do you sink dat hymn?
I only mean mine eyes vass dim.

Mrs. Bechtel believes the incident occurred at a funeral, and she offers the following closing lines:

Vy the devil you sing dat hymn?
I only mean mine eyes iss dim.⁵¹

The Brendle-Troxell volume, *Pennsylvania German Folk Tales* contains two parallels in both of which the congregations' responses are given in the Pennsylvania Dutch dialect. Instead of the eye glasses being missing, they are merely clouded, but the motif is the same: the congregation mistakes the preacher's statement for lining out a hymn.

PREACHER STORIES

The West End has had some distinguished clergymen of all faiths, but only one of them has emerged from the past as a legend. The man behind the legend was the Reverend E. S. Henry, who was pastor of St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Pine Grove from 1852 until his death in 1897.

Born on a farm near Shrewsbury, York County, November 30, 1823, and educated at Gettysburg College and Lutheran Theological Seminary, Preacher Henry was ordained in 1852. The same year he accepted a call from St. John's, arriving in Pine Grove after a dusty,

exhausting horseback ride from his home in York County. That pack saddle remained a memento of his ride as long as he lived.

Perhaps a few statistics will give an idea of how monumental was his pastoral task at St. John's. In the forty-five years that he was there, he preached more than ten thousand sermons, baptized more than six thousand children, confirmed more than a thousand persons, married more than a thousand couples, and conducted the services at more than two thousand funerals.

These statistics, impressive as they are, do not project the full image of Preacher Henry and his great stature in the West End community as a neighbor, civic leader, and humanitarian as well as minister. They do not tell us anything of his sense of humor, of his gifts as a storyteller, of his way with a sermon that he enriched with stories drawn from real life, from his own long experience. Nor do they hint of his organizing ability and his strength of character.

Tall, wearing a frock coat and a high silk hat, he was a familiar, picturesque figure on the streets of Pine Grove; in farming villages of Pine Grove Township; in Lorberry, Lincoln, Keffers, Rausch Creek and many other mine patches in the coal field north of Pine Grove. He was frequently called to minister to the sick and dying, especially in miners' homes after a serious mine accident. He had two honorary titles: "Father" Henry and *Parre* (Preacher) Henry.

He seldom gave advance notice of his pastoral calls on families. Nor could he. A plain man, it made no difference to him in what state he found the inside of a house. Some women, however, were embarrassed when he walked in on them before they had had a chance to "redd up" the house. One of these women, having heard Preacher Henry was in her neighborhood, became excited because she had no time in which to put her house in order. Crawling under her bed, she told one of her children to inform the pastor that she had gone away. But her feet could be seen. "Mom ain't home; she's gone away," said the child. "Tell your mother," said Preacher Henry, "the next time she goes away to take her feet along."

He generally made his rounds in a buggy drawn by his brown horse, Mike. Like his master, Mike was slow but safe, and completely reliable. Children loved him.

One day Preacher Henry was riding up Bird Hill in Pine Grove and caught up with a boy named Sherm Knapp and some of his friends, all making their way up the hill. He stopped his horse and

asked each boy in turn, "Do you swear?" and each in turn answered, "Oh, no, Preacher Henry, I don't swear." When he asked the question of Sherm, the boy answered truthfully, "Well, yes, I swear once in a while." The other boys were invited to ride in the buggy, while poor Sherm was left behind.

Serious illness prevented Preacher Henry from occupying his St. John's pulpit the latter part of April in 1897. His son, Rev. George Conrad Henry, took his place that day. During the sermon a white pigeon flew in through an open window, circled the church interior, and then flew out again. The congregation gasped, and tears welled in the son's eyes. This was an omen of approaching death—the venerable Preacher Henry's death, which occurred a few days later on April 26. The day of his death is still remembered: An arc of many beautiful hues spread over the eastern hillside although there had been no spring shower.

More than two thousand persons from all over the West End came to pay tribute, many of them miners who walked there. At the head of the long funeral procession was Mike, Preacher Henry's faithful old horse.⁵²

THE WAY TO HEAVEN

ONCE UPON A TIME a farmer died in Heckelschtedtle. His neighbors would have attended his funeral but, unfortunately, the death occurred in the midst of the harvest season. So the farmers made out among themselves to send one of their boys to the funeral to represent them. The boy was walking along the road toward Heckelschtedtle when presently a horse and buggy caught up with him.

"Where are you going, son?" asked the man in the buggy.

"Why, I'm going out there," answered the boy, pointing ahead of him. "One of our neighbors died and there was too much work on the farms and the farmers could not rightly take time off for the funeral, so they made out that I should go instead."

"Come, get on the buggy."

The boy jumped up and asked, "Who are you?"

"I'm a preacher. Where is Heckelschtedtle?"

"I will show you."

Just then a thought entered the boy's mind.

"Now if you're a preacher," he said, "You must show people the right way to heaven."

"That's right, son."

"Then how is it that you don't know where Heckelschtedtle is, and that ain't so far away from here?"⁵³

ALL IN FUN

THEY WERE HAVING SERVICES at the Dunkard Church, and a man by the name of Parres was preaching. Then one of the boys wanted to have a little fun, and he threw a chew of tobacco in Amos Zerby's neck, and then he quickly let his head drop and pretended that he was sleeping. Amos raised his hand and said: "Brother Parres, stop the meeting! There are bad people in this House of God. They throw chewing tobacco."

Then he turns around, sees Johnny Haldeman sitting back there, and he says: "Johnny Haldeman, that was you." Then Johnny said: "Amos Zerby, you're a damn liar!"⁵⁴

THE PREACHER AND THE MULE

A MENNONITE MINISTER thought that to curse and to plow his fields crookedly were the two worst things that could happen to him. Well, he bought a canal mule and proceeded to plow with it. The mule, trained to pull sideways, did so, and the minister couldn't make a straight furrow. His results were awful. They went around the field, a worse result! He stood looking over his work and was very discouraged. Then he went around again. No better! Then he stood in front of the mule and said (in Dutch): "We will go another time around and if it does not go any better, there'll be the goddamnest cursing!"⁵⁵

SPOOKS, SPOOFS, AND THE DEVIL



"When the early settlers looked beyond the Blue Mountains and saw a great wilderness of forests, mountains, swamps, and streams, they unanimously decided that this was a realm of Satan and solemnly consigned Schuylkill County to the devil."—*William H. Newell**

THE DEVIL HAS BEEN A FAMILIAR FIGURE IN PENNSYLVANIA DUTCH folklore. The people carried a vivid image of "the man with the cloven feet" against whose guile and wickedness they heard repeated warnings from their pastors. Numerous tales about the devil have long circulated orally south of the Blue Mountain, some of which are in the Brendle-Troxell folk tale collection published by the Pennsylvania German Society some years ago.¹ Devil stories are also heard in the West End of Schuylkill County, and none gets more laughs among miners than the following:

THE DEVIL IN EISENHOWER'S SALOON

When miners caroused it was usually done in a saloon, and Eisenhower's saloon in Cherryville, just north of Pine Grove, was one of the places in which they hung out. One evening, a long time

* See source note 3.

ago, there were seven or eight miners in that saloon; Ed Christ was tending bar. At the same time Dunkards were walking home from a church service they called a love feast, and as they passed Eisenhower's saloon they broke into a hymn.

The seven or eight miners, being drunk, decided to hold a mock love feast in imitation of the Dunkards. So they told Ed Christ, the bartender, to go ahead and serve up whiskey and pretzels as substitutes for the communion wine and bread. The drunken miners lifted their glasses, but no liquor touched their lips, for at that very moment all hell broke loose. Smoke suddenly poured through cracks in the floor and filled the saloon. There was the odor of brimstone. A sound like clanking chains announced the arrival of the devil. That awful sight brought the miners to their senses. They quick escaped through the door and windows; or by a stairway leading to the upstairs bedrooms, which was taken by Old Ed Christ who locked himself in his room. But the devil just walked through his door. Old Ed was a nervous wreck for weeks afterwards. The devil's cloven feet were burned that deep in the saloon floor that the mark couldn't be removed for a long time. Yah, that was one devil of an experience those miners had.²

There was much in the West End mining environment to confirm early German settlers in their belief in the supernatural—a belief originally brought over from Germany or Switzerland. In that haunted and benighted land of Schuylkill, they were isolated from the world.

Long after the last red man had departed from the area, the people feared a resumption of Indian burnings, killings, and scalplings. And living on the edge of the primeval forest, they never knew when a wolf might spring from a bush or a panther leap from an overhanging bough.

"It must not be supposed that the folklore of this county is a thing of the past," observed William H. Newell, an early collector. "It flourishes just as luxuriantly now as it did many years ago, and is deeply rooted in many of our people. Traditions handed down from generation to generation and stamped on the mind of childhood cannot be eradicated by so-called progress; and in spite of the efforts to reduce existence to a very monotonous and highly respected system of debit and credit, the belief in the unknown still lives. . . . Theoretically, schools, railroads, electricity, trolleys and state constables have obliterated the supernatural. In fact, they have done nothing of the kind. The Ghost still promenades at night and laughs at electricity."³

This was said nearly half a century ago, but the dead still return to their former haunts for one reason or another. Dr. Louis C. Jones, authority on ghostlore, states that "these reasons fall roughly into five categories: they come back to re-enact their own deaths; to complete unfinished business; to re-engage in what were their normal pursuits when they were alive; to protest or punish; or, finally, to warn, console, inform, guard or reward the living."⁴

Anthracite ghost stories, whether the setting is in a coal mine or somewhere on the surface, fall into one or another of Dr. Jones's categories. Following are some examples.

THE STOLEN LANDMARK

ON A DARK NIGHT a farmer once dug out the cornerstone or landmark on his farm and set it over farther on his neighbor's land, and in this way he acquired a few acres that did not belong to him. When the farmer died, his ghost had to walk about every night carrying this heavy stone on his back. Whenever the ghost met anyone, he said: "Where shall I put it? Where shall I put it?" The people were terribly afraid and almost ran themselves to death whenever they saw or heard the ghost.

One night the ghost meets a drunk and then he says again: "Where shall I put it? Where shall I put it?" The man was too drunk to be frightened. Then he looks at the ghost with the heavy cornerstone on his back and says: "Why, you stupid ox, put it back where you got it!" "That is what I have been waiting [to hear] for a long time," says the ghost. And he was never again seen after that.⁵

OLD MINER RETURNS FOR HIS MONEY

SOMEWHERE IN THE Mahantongo Valley stood a house which had been vacant for years because it was believed haunted. Three men finally decided to run this story to the ground. So they secreted themselves the first night and waited. Just at midnight they heard heavy footsteps coming down from the attic. Passing them was what appeared to be an old miner carrying a miner's lamp, and going to the cellar

where, in a corner, he began digging with his hands. In about ten minutes he stopped, picked up his lamp and returned to the attic. On the second night, the trio saw the same thing, wondering more than ever what the old fellow was searching for, but too scared to inquire.

On the third night, the watchers had fortified themselves with several shots of liquor. So when the old fellow reached the cellar and began digging, one of them got up enough nerve to ask what he was searching for. The apparition replied that he had hidden a can of money in this place, which had been his earthly home, and had died without having had a chance to reveal its hiding place to any one. They say the money was found under his direction, and the miner was never seen again.⁶

THUMP, THUMP WENT THE BOOTS

WHAT I AM ABOUT TO TELL YOU happened in Troutman's Hotel, owned by my grandfather, in Donaldson a long time ago. In those days hotels and inns had stables because travel was mostly by horse and carriage. They had a hosteler who took care of the horses. He lived in a little room, and each night as he prepared for bed he would drop his heavy hobnailed boots on the floor. One thump soon followed by another echoed all over the house. This was a regular routine.

One night the hosteler was kicked in the head by one of the horses he was tending. He was carried upstairs to his room and there he died. But his death did not put an end to the thump, thump on the floor, only now it was ghostly. My grandparents, my father, and the hotel guests kept hearing it night after night. The sound often awakened them, and they would get up to look for him, or to see what else was making the noise.

There is a tradition in the family that the hosteler had accumulated quite a bit of money by saving his tips. So they looked all over the house for this money he was supposed to have hidden, but they never found it.

Could the thump, thump have come from the hosteler's ghost returning every night to locate his hoard?⁷

A TELLER OF GHOST STORIES

Among the more interesting of my tapes is the one I made at the Pottsville animal shelter of the Society for the Prevention Of Cruelty to Animals. Built of concrete blocks, the shelter is isolated in the woods bordering the western end of the city. The tape contains ghost stories recorded that day by the poundkeeper, Theodore Roosevelt Ebert, a fifty-three-year-old ex-anthracite miner. The shrill chorus heard in the recording's background represents the gratuitous contribution of an assortment of caged dogs barking, howling, yelping, and otherwise protesting the protective custody in which they were held. On the other hand, some of the dogs might have been just plain hungry, or even in pain. The cacophonous noise subsided for an interval only to be resumed to give a suitable welcome to a newcomer, a stray that had just been picked up on a Pottsville street.

To reassure his employers, I hasten to explain that Ebert did not neglect his duties while recording for me. He is a conscientious employee, devoted to the well-being of his unhappy charges. He related his ghost stories intermittently in the course of an afternoon when he could spare the time. I came away with a strong impression that Theodore Roosevelt Ebert loves dogs, especially underdogs.

He comes by this love naturally as he was reared in a railroad patch whose Pennsylvania Dutch name was, believe it or not, *Hundschedtle* (dogtown, or village of dogs). The patch, located on the outskirts of Cressona between Pottsville and the West End, acquired its place name from the fact that each family provided a home for several dogs. So the place was overrun with dogs of every breed and description. Cressona's inhabitants were mostly Pennsylvania Dutch railroaders who spoke the dialect among themselves.

Hundschedtle observed a custom common in mine patches throughout the anthracite region in the old days. Cut off from regular commercial entertainment, the people improvised their own. Around the company water pump there was a stretch of grass known as the "village green" or the "pump head green." The railroaders and their families (and their many dogs) would assemble here on summer Saturday nights for a good time. They brought lunch and beer, as well as fiddles, guitars, banjos, harmonicas, and zithers. There was group and solo singing and plenty of dancing. The people also liked to tell stories, especially ghostlore, in English and in the dialect.

The custom was on the wane when Ebert was a boy, but there was still time for him to listen to ghost stories on the green. Ebert, whose father was a railroader, left school at the age of ten and worked at odd jobs until he was seventeen when he became a laborer in the Reading's Pine Hill Colliery. He also worked in Wadesville and Lytle Collieries; all are gone now. When the industry shut down south of the Broad Mountain, he joined other unemployed miners in bootleg coal holes for a period.

Ebert's repertory of ghost stories is extensive; I recorded eleven of them in the course of an afternoon. He tells his yarns with a deadpan expression as if they were accounts of his own experiences. He makes use of the old Mansion House in Cressona, where the Ebert family lived, as a setting for some of his ghost tales. The Ebert ghost stories in this chapter are part of the great oral tradition of the anthracite mining region.

THE DISAPPEARING DOG

ONE NIGHT when I was a boy walking with friends along Seven Stars Road, a big black dog appeared from nowhere and came between me and one of my pals. And I went to pet the dog but it disappeared right from under me. I couldn't see where it got to. Just like the snap of a finger it disappeared. Well, I'll tell you, I had about two miles to go to get home, and I made it in nothing flat. I never seen anything like that and I never hope to see anything like it again. This happened later to others. No one in the locality had a dog of that type, and it was seen by others with practically the same experience. No one could ever explain why or where it came from.⁸

THE PLAYING PLAYER PIANO

"THE OLD RUGGED CROSS" was my father's favorite hymn and he often played it on our player piano. It was played at his funeral. Well, one night we were all awakened by the player piano giving out with "The Old Rugged Cross." We didn't know of anyone being downstairs so we looked into it. The hymn went on but the roll wasn't moving.

Well, we were surely scared. I'd say it played about half-way through and then stopped, and we couldn't understand this. We couldn't sleep so we sat around to try to figure this thing out. We looked in the piano but discovered no mouse or no rats. No, we couldn't find anything.

Three nights later the same song, "The Old Rugged Cross," was heard again, and three nights later it happened again. We gave the piano a good going over and found nothing whatsoever. And while I was examining this, I had a heavy ring on and the ring got caught in one of the strings and broke it. From then on we heard no more of "The Old Rugged Cross."⁹

THE SWINGING WASH BASIN

ONE DAY while sitting by the stove in the kitchen of my home in Cressona, I was surprised to see a face basin hanging from a nail on the wall suddenly start to move. Back and forth it went just like a pendulum until it gradually stopped. As I sat there I tried to figure out what had made it move like that. There was no wind blowing. Even if there had been a wind, it could not move the basin like that as no doors or windows were open. Then I thought there might be a mouse inside the basin. When I finally got up nerve enough to take it off the nail, I found nothing in it. But I sure was scared. I mean scared.¹⁰

WHO PULLED DOWN THE COVERS?

WE HAD A MAN by the name of Albert staying at our home, and he had a strange experience. He'd go to bed at night and something would get a hold of the bedclothing and pull it down to the foot end of the bed. Just fold it up neatly, and he thought it was someone in the room. But there was nobody there. And this happened three nights in succession.

The second and third nights were moonlight nights. Even though the moon was shining in the room, it happened on those two nights, too. Whatever it was he could not see it, but it took the bedclothing

and folded it up just like a human being would, neatly at the foot end of the bed. And he thought he was seeing things. So he got me to watch, and I seen the bedclothing being folded up at the foot end of his bed, but did not see a human being or anything. And that is true. I seen that myself. And that was the last it happened, when I watched it.¹¹

THE DRAGGING CHAIN

THIS HAPPENED outside the house and also inside one night. Well, first we heard a sound just like a chain dragging up and down the steps. We could not see it, but we'd hear it night after night. We could not locate it. At first we thought somebody was playing a trick, but we went all around the house and could not see it. So this went on quite a while. And we were kind of scared and worked up about it. There were no cellar steps at that part of the house where the sound was coming from, just a stairway leading from the kitchen to upstairs bedrooms. So then one man with a shotgun sat himself down and when he heard the invisible chain rattle, he took a shot in the dark. He made a pretty big hole in the side of the kitchen, but we found one link of a big chain at the bottom of the steps. I would say the link was about four inches long. And that was the last we heard of that.¹²

DOORS, DOORS, DOORS

WE LIVED in the old Mansion House in Cressona. There were ninety-three doors, including closet doors, in this home. It had a big ball-room, a winding stairway, a beautiful place inside. I had never counted the windows, but I know distinctly there was ninety-three doors. Well, one day I was sitting in a room that had sixteen doors including closet doors. Not a breeze stirring. In fact, I was laying on the old couch. My brother was laying on another couch. And all at once the doors opened wide, banged against the walls, and the closet doors opened wide, too. And they slammed shut. All doors,

every one of them, closet doors and all. And no wind blowing. The windows rattled. Well, we surely jumped. I mean jumped. We jumped out of there quick and went out in the kitchen and held the door in case it flies shut again. We went out to make sure there was no wind or no breeze, and there wasn't. Well, we got out of there, and stayed out until our daddy came home at two o'clock in the morning from work. We were too scared to go back in the house.¹³

HEADLESS GHOST IN WHITE

WHAT I'M GOING TO TELL YOU now happened in Hundschedtle. That's dogtown in English. Jerry Reed drove a four-head mule team and wagon delivering mine timber to different collieries. Everything was fine until he came to an old wooden bridge spanning a creek. One evening Jerry found out why his mules balked in front of that bridge. He saw a headless ghost in white. Though he was scared, he went after it and saw it disappear under the bridge. With no ghost on the bridge, the team went on. This experience continued off and on for quite a while. Finally, Jerry got a shotgun and one evening when he got to the bridge there was the headless ghost. He shot toward this thing and again it went under the bridge; but after this shooting the white spook did not return. The team no longer stopped after that. When the mules came to the bridge, they just crossed it.¹⁴

TRIUMPH IN A HAUNTED HOUSE

WE HAD AN old haunted house in Hundschedtle that had a black spook. The people who told me this story claimed that a white spook wouldn't harm you but a black one would. They got one fellow to go in the house. His name was "Hopper" Reed. They called him that because he hopped around on a peg leg; his leg had been cut off right above the knee when he worked in the breaker many years ago. Hopper was pretty brave. "I'll break any spook up that you ever heard of," he bragged. "You just lead me to it." They did.

So Hopper went up in the second-story window, and waited for this here black spook. But, of course, when it come to five minutes of twelve, why, a white spook appeared—not a black one. Hopper didn't stop to shoot at it or try to get rid of this spook. He just jumped out of the upstairs window and broke his peg leg and got stuck in the mud. It turned out that these fellows did it to give him a scare. It was all a hoax.

But three weeks later, the real spook—the black one—appeared in the haunted house. The windows of the old house rattled something awful. And the fellows came back to Hopper and begged him to get rid of that bad spook. Hopper said, "By golly, it is true now, but you guys pulled a fast one. Now I'll show you how to get rid of a spook." Hopper had some knowledge of how to get rid of spooks taught him by some old-timer.

So, finally, he caught two rats, put them up there in a cage and tied a little dog up there and lit a candle between them. The dog would not go after the rats on account of the candle. When the candle died down, Hopper had some sulphur and white powder, and he went down and lit the powder, which went off with a flash. The dog comes yippin' down the stairs and outside. When they went up next morning and looked, there was a black cloak and a black hood laying in the corner and the two rats were dead. They never seen the black spook after that.¹⁵

SPOOKY MINES

Anthracite mines were spooky. That is why they were the source of so many ghost stories told by Pennsylvania Dutch miners. Accustomed to sunlight, fresh air, and open spaces, Dutch farmers who became mineworkers were often shocked by underground conditions. When they rode down a mine shaft or a slope, they imagined themselves descending into purgatory. They were baffled and frightened by many unfamiliar sounds, strange lights, and curious odors they encountered below. The average Dutch miner performed his work with a butt in a hole of blackest pitch which the dim rays of his lamp barely penetrated. It is not surprising to find that his imagination conjured up grotesque shapes, forms, and phantoms that could not be rationalized.

Ghosts appeared in the mines in different guises—as a strange light, for example. Many years ago the miners in the Greenwood Colliery near Tamaqua believed that ghosts of miners recently killed in a gas explosion roamed in headings and gangways. The ghosts made their presence known by a moving, mysterious light. One never knew where this strange light would appear next, and so it was feared. One early morning an extra fireboss, who had been assigned to substitute for the regular man, was making his rounds when he saw the light, and promptly lost his nerve. He ran to the shanty at the bottom of the shaft, but the light followed him. Soon it, too, was in the shanty. The “ghost” was the regular fireboss who had showed up unexpectedly for work but had neglected to inform the foreman or his substitute.¹⁶

The Avondale mine disaster, made famous by a ballad, gave rise to a rumor of galloping ghosts soon after the explosion, which took one hundred and ten lives in 1869. For several weeks the surviving workers refused to enter the mine until the management had removed what they believed were the disaster victims’ ghosts. An investigation traced the origin of the rumor. A miner had tried to light a lucifer match on his wet clothing; the coruscating flashes, piercing the blackness of the mine, were mistaken for ghosts by another miner who spread the rumor.¹⁷

Another source of ghost tales was the sound of surface water seeping into coal mines and dripping from the roof in an endless rain. The sound varied according to the action of the water on loose stones in fissures and potholes of rock strata. What was the effect of such sounds on the imagination of a pumpman alone in a section of the mine where several of his fellow workers had but recently been killed?

The answer came from Frank Troutman, an eighty-six-year-old miner, while reminiscing on forty years of mining experience in his home in Minersville. He recollected that early in his career he was on a twelve-hour night shift minding a water pump at the bottom of Silverton Colliery near Llewellyn. Said Troutman:

One Sunday night, about half past twelve, I suddenly heard a queer sound. It sounded like gurgling—like if a person was in agony. It was terrible to hear. It made your hair stand up straight on your head to hear it. I was alone at the time, and looked around, but couldn’t see nothin’. It’d stop and then maybe about a half hour or an hour it’d start up again. Well, I couldn’t stand it.

I went and rang the bell for the engineer to let the car down, and I goes up to him, to the surface.

When the firebosses reported for duty [about four o'clock] they wanted to know what was wrong, why I was up. I told 'em what was wrong. They said it was my imagination. "No," I said. So they gave me another job and put another man in my place, but he didn't last long. They couldn't keep nobody down at the pump with this noise. And so it went on that way till the colliery shut down for good over fifty years ago.

I didn't find out exactly what had caused that gurgling noise, but through the years I figured that it must've been the water coming down in between cracks in the rock.¹⁸

"Uncle Charlie" Brenner of Molleystown, eighty years old, recollected the following ghost story out of his experience:

When I was a breaker boy of thirteen at the Lincoln Colliery, I had some contact with a spook—not in the mine but on the public highway. I was on the night shift walking along between eleven and twelve o'clock (that's when spooks come out in the open) making footprints in the snow, when I turned around and saw a spook. He had a white bag over his head and his coat collar was turned up. He followed me. If I changed path the spook changed. I had a suspicion as to who the spook really was. When I couldn't shake him I picked up a rock to throw at him. Then he hollered in Dutch, "Don't throw Charlie. It's only me!" That finished him as a spook.¹⁹

THE MISSING MINE MULE

THE ANTHRACITE INDUSTRY is well over a hundred years old, and in the early days, in individual collieries, they didn't survey all the workings. The maps weren't complete. Surveys were never made. And we, as engineers, used to survey all the new workings and then if we had the spare time, we'd survey the old workings. Some of it'd been standing for fifty or sixty years. And we'd make surveys on them.

On one occasion, in the Reading's Suffolk Colliery near St. Nicholas, we were surveying a gangway that went around in a circle. It started out east, then turned south and then went back west. And it was about a mile around this loop and we used to make a short cut, like

going up over a hill and down the other side. On this morning the foreman says: "One of our mules got out of the stable and is probably lost in the mine. If you happen to see any signs of him let us know."

We surveyed all day and in the evening, while returning we walked up, left the gangway, and went over this hill down the other side. I stopped when I saw two glassy-looking eyes staring at me. The fellow coming behind me bumped into me saying, "What's the matter?" I said, "Do you see what I see?" He looked and said, "Oh, my, what's that?" "Two big eyes staring at us." I was young and inexperienced then and they sure looked spooky to me. We were both afraid to approach the eyes. Finally, though still scared, we took short steps toward the object until we had come near enough to see that the glassy eyes belonged to a mule whose head was caught between props. He was dead. So we went to the bottom and told the foreman where he could find his mule.²⁰

THREE WHITE MULES

THIS HAPPENED in Wadesville Colliery in 1924, and I heard about it later. A butty of mine by the name of Oscar who lived on the Pine Grove Road drove three head of mules down in that mine—what they call "pulling a trip out the gangway." So one morning he was going in the gangway when his mules stop dead. He was riding on the bumper of the first car as usual. When the mules stopped he went up ahead to see what the trouble was, and do you know what he saw? Three white mules each with a rider on its back. He was petrified. "I didn't even know what to do," said Oscar to me. "I didn't believe in spooks, but I knew the mules seen something and sensed something. What I seen they must've seen. What they seen I must've. So the only thing I could think of was to get my team unhooked and tie them fast to the timber, which I did. Then I got half a stick of dynamite and lit it and threw it at the three white mules and their riders. I couldn't see the spooks no more after that. I hooked up my mules again and they went just as good as anything."

Oscar swore that this actually happened to him, but when he told the story to his inside foreman and fireboss they laughed. But I didn't laugh at Oscar because Oscar was a pretty conscientious fellow.

In fact, I traveled with him to work and back every day, and he was not the type of fellow to stretch these things.²¹

IT WAS NO HANG-OVER

WHAT I'M GOING TO TELL YOU now happened to me in the Wadesville Colliery many years ago, in a section of the mine sixteen hundred feet deep. I was alone, but the other mineworkers followed me about ten minutes later. I opened the draw hole leading into our gangway when I seen a bright light. I called thinking somebody was ahead of me on the job, but no, there was no answer. The light spread out like a flame. And then I seen like a white sheet or smoky wraith in the shape of a man and a woman as clear as anything. I didn't even get all the way through the draw hole. The only light supposed to be there was the one we used on our battery lamps. Suddenly the man and woman disappeared and I seen them no more. Well, I got back out of that draw hole and got my breath. "Am I seein' things?" I knew I wasn't drinkin', and I knew sure enough I didn't have a hang-over. But finally got nerve enough and went in.²²

MYSTERY IN A BOOTLEG COAL HOLE

I WANT TO TELL YOU about an experience I had in a bootleg coal hole. I worked this coal hole myself in between hauling coal for other bootleggers in Pottsville. When I went in the gangway there was a bright flash; it wasn't red, but a pure white flash. Lit up the whole gangway, and right at the face where the coal was. Then I saw an object there that looked like a reddish or pinkish donkey or pony. Well, I got scared. I just stood there and couldn't believe this. I thought at first it was some kind of an explosion, but knew I had no gas there, and I was working alone (which legally I wasn't supposed to do, but they did those things).

That was about two hundred and fifty feet below the surface and east in the gangway about one hundred and fifty feet. The flash left an odor, a sulphur odor. After the air had cleared I went into the place of the explosion and saw a pile of round rocks that looked like grapefruit, but where they come from I don't know as no rocks was supposed to be there. It was all coal face. I never found out

what caused the explosion or who put the rocks there or what the flash was all about. Never could figure it out.²³

VENTRILOQUISM IN THE MINES

In many mines there were workers who could throw their voices. They were amateur ventriloquists. Sometimes they were a source of amusement, especially at entertainments in and out of the mines. Often, however, they carried their humor too far by scaring miners away from their work by pretending to be ghosts. The target of Pennsylvania Dutch ventriloquists usually were workers they called outlanders, especially those of the most recent immigration who were more sensitive to supernatural objects than the Dutch themselves. The following story illustrates this point:

AND AWAY THEY RAN

IN THE LINCOLN COLLIERY many years ago we had a miner named Elias who could do almost anything he wanted by throwing his voice. There was a group of foreigners working in the gangway and Elias wanted to have a little fun with them. So he waited for his chance. It came several days after a Polish miner named Andy Shalinsky was killed up in his breast where he was working. Elias started to go up the chute when some of the foreigners stopped him. "No, Elias, not go up there. Man got killed there. Name Andy Shalinsky."

"Well, I'm going up there anyway," said Old Elias. He got a handful of stuff and throwed it up and this caused a rattle that the foreigners could hear through the chute. Little did they know what the old fox had on his mind. Suddenly there came a weird moan from up in the breast. "What goes on there?" demanded one of the men on the gangway. "Whoo, whoo, whoo, this is Andy Shalinsky," moaned Elias's disguised voice. "Me come back finishin' breast." When they heard that, the men lost no time packing up their tins and running for the bottom where they demanded to be hoisted to the top. They weren't going to work, they said, with a ghost above them.²⁴



18

LORE OF BREAKER BOYS AND MULE DRIVERS

A slight little fellow, not yet in his teens,
His arms to his elbows tucked down in his jeans;
No cares of the present, no thoughts of the past,
No plans for the future, no troubles that last;
No bird as it sings o'er its nest in the tree
Its ode to the morning more happy than he,
His loud ringing whistle, clear, piercing and shrill,
Re-echoes the joys of his heart, o'er the hill—
He is starting in life as a miner.*

HOW FOLKLORE WAS HANDED DOWN FROM ONE GENERATION TO ANOTHER among Pennsylvania Dutch mining families in the West End was demonstrated to me by Mrs. Anna Daubert Green, then of the West Schuylkill Press and Pine Grove *Herald*. The young woman is a daughter of Elvin E. Daubert, a granddaughter of Harvey Stahl, and a niece of George Stahl, all former miners in the Lincoln Colliery. Grandfather Stahl died of "miner's asthma."

Anna Green was only two years old at the time of her grand-

* W. B. Wilson, *Memories* (Indianapolis, 1903), quoted in George Korson, *Coal Dust on the Fiddle* (Philadelphia, 1943), pp. 144-45.

father's death, so her knowledge of Pennsylvania Dutch folklore has come from her grandmother and mother, and she, in turn, is passing it on to her young son.

With her permission I set up my tape-recording equipment in her Pine Grove office on the morning of September 9, 1957. Between telephone calls she sang and talked into my microphone. She began by singing her version of the familiar "Pony Boy," which, she said, was traditional in her family:

Pony boy, Pony boy
Won't you be my Pony boy?
Don't say no, here I go,
Up and down across the plains;
Marry me, carry me,
Giddap, giddap,
Whoah—ho—ho, my Pony boy!

Anna Green recited the Pennsylvania Dutch parallel of "This Little Pig Went to Market." It is called *Des is da Dauma* ("This is the Thumb"). "Instead of using the child's toes as in 'This Little Pig Went to Market,'" she explained, "we point to his fingers, starting with the thumb." Following is the rhyme and her English translation of the Pennsylvania Dutch dialect:

*Des is da Dauma,
Der soocht die Blauma;
Der laesst sit uf,
Der drawgt sie hayme—
Un der glay Ding fresst sie ol!*

This is the thumb,
This one hunts the plums,
This one gathers them,
This one carries them home
And this little one eats all of them.

"The Pennsylvania Dutchman of old believed in taking a new baby upstairs to insure his 'getting up' in the world," she said. "Related to this belief was the custom of foretelling the child's future. On his first birthday anniversary, a baby boy was laid on the floor, and in a circle around him were placed a potato, a bottle, a coin, and a book. Whichever item the baby reached for first foretold his future. For instance, if he reached for the potato, it was believed that he would become a farmer. If he touched the coin it meant he would be wealthy. If he went for the bottle it meant he would

turn into a drunkard. If he was attracted by the book, it meant he would become a scholar."

Anna Green is too young to remember that when this nursery game was played in the home of a Pennsylvania Dutch miner two or three generations ago it was almost impossible for a miner's son to rise above the status into which he was born.

The old Scottish custom by which miners bound their babies to mine owners for a lifetime of servitude in coal mines merely by accepting "arles," or earnest money, at the baptismal ceremony, was not imported to the United States. Nevertheless, the combination of low wages, irregular work, and pressure from mine bosses forced many a miner to yield to the temptation of taking his young son out of school and putting him to work in the breaker. "God, must my boys follow in my footsteps?" he might cry in his Pennsylvania Dutch dialect. Yet more often than not, it had to be. In the West End of Schuylkill County, as in other parts of the anthracite region, some Pennsylvania Dutch boys under ten years of age put schooling behind them to embark on a mining career. The boys did not resist the change because they saw two immediate advantages: first, they would have spending money; and secondly, they would feel grown-up, like a boy putting on a policeman's or a fireman's uniform. This premature contact with the harsh discipline of industrial labor, however, left its scars on them.

During most of the nineteenth century, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania had no legislation whatever preventing child labor in collieries or protecting the boys after they had passed through the breaker door. The anthracite act of 1870¹ set a minimum limit of twelve years for boys working inside the mines, but was silent on an age minimum for boys employed in breakers. The 1885 law established twelve years as the age limit for breaker boys and boosted the underground minimum to fourteen years.² When the United Mine Workers of America entered the picture, it brought pressure to bear to raise age limits for both inside and outside child labor.

The most conspicuous feature of the anthracite landscape was the dust-enveloped coal breaker, a towering building of unique construction, into which raw anthracite was fed from the mine. After being weighed, cleansed, and graded, the coal ran down into the breaker pockets from where it was loaded on railroad cars for shipment to

markets all over the East and converted into light, heat, and power.

Breaker boys separated rock and slate from the coal; occasionally men too old to continue mining were also employed at this task. The boys sat on benches across wide chutes extending from the main screen near the top of the breaker to the pockets at the bottom. They were perched behind one another like backstops. If the first boy in the row missed any black rock or slate, the boy behind him was expected to halt the refuse. A slate picker would interrupt the flow with his hobnailed boots to aid in picking the rock and slate, and then allow the black current to resume its journey to the boys behind him and, ultimately, to the breaker pockets.

In the old days there were two types of breakers—wet and dry. In dry breakers the coal dust was so thick that the boys had difficulty distinguishing between anthracite and slate without a miner's lamp, and often would hold the pieces in their hands to determine by weight the difference between them; slate is heavier than coal. Young slate pickers wore handkerchiefs over their mouths to keep out the dust, and many of them adopted their fathers' habit of tobacco chewing to keep their mouths moist. Many a case of miner's asthma started in the breaker.

The boys fixed their eyes on the chutes and the stream of coal, rock, and slate. Fear of the devil in the person of the picker boss forced this concentration. With a whip or switch in his hand, the boss loomed menacingly over them. Fiction depicts few villains whose cruelty to children matched that of the picker (or chute) boss. Nothing escaped his sinister gaze. Should a boy daydream, doze off, address his neighbor to the right or left, or even turn his head slightly, retribution would be swift and painful; the boss's weapon was omnipresent. President Thomas Kennedy of the United Mine Workers of America, a slate picker at the turn of the century, recalled that the picker boss he hated most carried a heavy broomstick with which to remind the young laggards of their solemn duty to the mythical Coal King; the stick was lowered on a boy's neck, back, or on his knuckles.³

In the summer the breaker was bad enough to work in, but winter made the place almost unbearable. By its peculiar construction the building was drafty, and the boys' grimy rags were too thin to keep them warm. Usually there was a coal stove at the top of the breaker, but its heat did not reach the boys who picked rock and slate with numbed fingers. They shivered to the marrow. Now and then they

took turns at thawing out in front of the stove—interludes that were all too infrequent.

The breaker was particularly hard on beginners who had to submit to hazing by the older boys. A common form of "baptism" consisted of kicking a cloud of coal dust down on a greenhorn's head from the rafters above. The roar of machinery was frightening. Painful were the "red tops," a term applied to bleeding fingertips cut by the sharp edges of running coal and slate.

Accidents were inevitable. The boys were exposed to many hazards. The most terrible thing that could happen to one was to be ground up with the coal. Many were the wailings of a mother for her poor little son. In the eighties, a boy nicknamed "Mickey Pick-Slate" was crushed between the huge steel rolls in the Audenried breaker near Hazleton. The shock from this violent death affected the mind of his mother, a miner's widow. For a period after the accident, she would make a daily visit to the breaker in search of her son. Her eyes would wander from one grimy face to another and then she would turn her footsteps homeward—alone. This touching spectacle inspired a ballad from which the following four lines are quoted:

Mickey Pick-Slate, early and late,
That was this poor little breaker boy's fate;
A poor simple woman at the breaker still waits
To take home her Mickey Pick-Slate.⁴

Mrs. Henry E. Wertz, the Lincoln village storekeeper, told me of another breaker accident that occurred only a few years before the closing of the Lincoln Colliery. She does not recall the name of the boy but thinks he must have been at least eighteen years old, and worked at the top of the breaker where coal cars from the mine were landed. The boy liked to amuse himself during lulls with rhymes which he wrote on the board. One day he chalked these lines:

Early to bed and early to rise,
Makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise,
But makes a man miss all the fun till he dies.
Go to bed when you please,
And lie at your ease,
And you'll die just the same from some Latin disease.⁵

The next day the boy was dead. He had been caught between two coal cars and crushed to death.

Following their fathers' example, breaker boys sometimes went on strike. This would tie up the whole colliery; and the miners, often

including their own fathers, would be sent home. In the early days of the industry, coal operators resorted to a custom known as "whipping 'em in," which meant driving them back into the breaker with whips. One of these breaker boy strikes occurred at a dry breaker near Pottsville in the nineties. The coal operator and another man stood at the door with outstretched arms to hold the boys in the building. Some of the boys climbed up on the rafters and kicked clouds of coal dust on the men and thereby accomplished the strikers' escape. It did not take much of a grievance to cause a stampede out of the breaker. In a certain strike one boy asked another, "What are we striking for anyway?" And the other boy's reply was, "Well, I don't know, but I'll be damned if we'll give up until we get it."

Elderly Bill Keating, the anthracite ballad singer, whose ballad, "Down, Down, Down," is familiar, remembers Pennsylvania Dutch boys from twelve to fifteen years of age working in the Glendower Colliery at the western end of the Heckscherville Valley early in the present century. From their homes in the agricultural valleys to Glendower breaker over the mountain, the distance was about six miles, and, wearing felt boots, they walked back and forth, often in deep snow. It was dark when they walked to work in the morning and it was dark when they went home, and so they wore miners' lamps. For a ten-hour day, six days a week, they earned four dollars, according to Keating. Bill said that they were husky boys and not given to rowdiness, but when goaded into fist fights by Irish boys like himself, they gave a good account of themselves.

Frank Miller's experience as a breaker boy was typical of what Pennsylvania Dutch boys faced half a century or so ago. Stocky, gray-haired and sixty-one, Miller is a seasoned mining man. He was serving as a substitute fire boss in the Reading's Maple Hill Colliery when it was abandoned several years prior to my visit to his home in Branchdale. His reminiscences follow:

I started working in the breaker of Good Springs Colliery. I lived on a farm in Valley View at the time, and walked six miles to work to the top of Good Spring Mountain to [reach] the breaker, and after ten hours' work, walked back in the evening.

That was in the winter. My father was a farmer and miner. In the wintertime there wasn't much farming, and most of the farmers at that time they'd go into the mines even when the snow was up to a couple of feet deep. There's a lot of farmers worked in the mines.

I started going to school in Valley View when I was eight and

quit at eleven to work in the breaker. I couldn't talk English 'til I was fourteen. The family and the whole neighborhood talked only Dutch. We had to have Dutch teachers to talk to us.

I worked in both dry and wet breakers. Dry breakers were full of coal dust. Sometimes it was so thick I couldn't see so good to pick the slate and had to use my cotton [wick] lamp. When I went to work it was dark in the morning and getting dusk in the afternoon already. So we had to use miners' lamps, which burned whale oil.

Most of the breaker boys' fathers were miners in the same colliery and used to bring the boys along to work with them. The fathers quit a little earlier, and so the boys walked home themselves, often in groups. We had lots of fights with other boys of different nationalities.

In them first years of my workin' in the breakers, why, the chute bosses were kind o' Hitlers, to my way of thinking. They had pretty good fists and pretty good back hands, and they'd give you a slam around the snout if they didn't like what you were doing—that is, if you took it. I was one of them guys that didn't take it. I was kind of a bullhead. I fought back. They would hit you if you talked to your neighbor, the lad beside you. You couldn't talk to him. You had to keep your mouth shut. Get your slate out; do your work.

Your fingers would be sore. They'd bleed from cuts caused by sharp pieces of coal and slate running down the chute. We called the sore fingers "red tops." After you got used to it and your fingers healed, why, you didn't mind it so much.

We had a short lunch period, and no time to go outside for fresh air. We ate where we worked. Sometimes when we got hungry we'd try to snatch a bite of a sandwich if the chute boss wasn't looking. Well, if the boss caught you at it, and if you took it, he'd give you a slam on the head with his cap or somethin'.⁶

Charles Solt, a mine foreman living in Minersville, recollected an amusing experience as a breaker boy. A native of Carbon County where his German ancestors settled in the eighteenth century, Charlie started his mining career in the breaker of the Otto Colliery in Branchdale, in 1914, at the age of thirteen. The breaker boss was Michael McGuire. Following is the Solt reminiscence:

I had picked slate for a day or two when the boss [Michael McGuire] put me in a job outside watchin' the scraper line. He gave me the understandin' that the third time the scraper line jumps off I was [to be] fired. My job was to pick the rock off the scraper line so it wouldn't jump off. Well, I was only thirteen years old and worked nine hours a day. I'd get a little sleepy and doze off. The first thing I knowed the scraper line would be throwed off.

Well, first time was all right. The mechanics come and put it on. Same thing happened the second time. So I remembered the boss tellin' me that the third time I was [to be] fired. So when it jumped off the third time I grabbed me [dinner] can, and beat it down over the rock bank, thinkin' nobody'd see me. Boss McGuire an' all come lookin' around the breaker for me. One old chute boss said, "I seen the little bugger goin' down over the bank like a hammer to hell."

Seventeen years later I married the breaker boss's daughter. First time he seen me come in the house, he said, "Boy, do I remember you, you little bugger, you. You're the lad that run down over the rock bank!"⁷

DOWN IN THE BOWELS OF THE EARTH

I'm a little collier lad,
Hardworking all the day,
From early morn till late at night
No time have I to play.
Down in the bowels of the earth
Where no bright sun rays shine,
You'll find me busy at my work,
A white slave of the mine.⁸

After several years in the coal breaker, a miner's young son became a door boy. He sat on a wooden bench in the dark gangway until the approach of a trip of coal cars. Then he would run ahead to open a door; another boy riding on the last car slammed the same door shut as the mule pulled away; these doors controlled the flow of air currents through a mine's ventilation system.

Door tending was part of the hardening and learning process that prepared a boy for his life's ambition—to receive a contract miner's certificate. During this apprenticeship he learned to make his way around a coal mine in darkness; to handle his cap light with caution; to become familiar with various sounds, including the signs and warnings of impending disaster given off by the coal face, timber props, and the roof; to overcome his fear of mine rats and mules; and to adjust to certain discomforts. When a ventilation door was opened, his body was suddenly chilled by a gust of cold air. Water dropped down on his head from the surface in a perpetual rain. The gangway floor was muddy, requiring boots to keep his feet dry. And he was always exposed to danger—

In the mine depths' gloom and silence,
Void of sunlight though 'tis mid-day,
There a fearless little door boy sat alone;
Unseen dangers hover round him
At his post upon the gangway,
While he works, and thinks of mother sick at home;
Without warning there's a cave-in,
Rock and timber downward crashing
Hurl the lad moaning to the rocky floor.⁹

"At his post upon the gangway," a door boy could not escape the watchful eye of authority, yet some of them lived dangerously. For instance, smoking was forbidden at the Lincoln Colliery, but this did not keep some door boys from taking furtive puffs at a cigarette or pipe. One of them was caught in the act by the late Rudy Schneider, the colliery superintendent, leading to the following colloquy:

"Boy, don't you know you ain't supposed to smoke here?" thundered the superintendent.

"Yah, I know it, but I watch out for the bosses. They won't catch me at it."

"I'm the superintendent."

"Well, you've got a helluva good job," answered the door boy.

Superintendent Schneider might have fired the young culprit, but the innocent rejoinder changed his mind, and he walked away laughing.¹⁰

Another boy, having been reprimanded for some minor infraction of the company rules, was in tears. Upon seeing his tear-stained face, an Irish miner asked, "What's the matter with you, me lad, this morning?"

"The boss bawled me out."

"And don't you be takin' that too seriously now, me lad."

The next morning the miner found the boy crying again. "And now what's the trouble?"

"Oh, I just got another bawling out from the boss."

"Well, now, that's too bad. Next time tell him to go to hell."

On the third morning the miner met the door boy, his dinner can and water bottle slung across his shoulder, on his way out of the mine. "And what's the idea of going out at this time of day?"

"Well, I did like you told me; I told the boss to go to hell and he fired me."

"Well, I'll be damned," said the miner, half to himself. "Couldn't you have told him under your breath?"¹¹

My sweetheart's the mule in the mines,
I drive her without reins or lines,
On the bumper I sit,
I chew and I spit
All over my sweetheart's behind.¹²

Mule driving was the job most collier boys aspired to, but before getting a mule, they had to pass some time spragging. In the days when coal cars carried no brakes, the only way to stop a trip of cars flying down a grade was by thrusting a sprag (a short, round piece of hard wood tapered at each end) between the spokes of a wheel. It was a hazardous occupation. Spraggers lost fingers and even a whole hand in the operation. Some fell under the cars and were killed.

In the heyday of the anthracite industry, mules were kept in the mines night and day. A driver boy went down the shaft before seven o'clock in the morning. He brought his mule from the underground stable to the bottom of the shaft where he hitched him to a string of empty coal cars that he took to the miners. On the return trip he brought back an equal number of loaded cars. When he was ready to start on a trip through the labyrinth of gangways and headings, the driver boy climbed into the forward car, often standing on the bumper just behind his mule, cracked his whip (a long, braided leather lash attached to a short, stout stick for a handle) and was off with a shout or a song. In the beginning, loads were pulled by single mules, but later teams of mules, harnessed in tandem, became the rule. The leader carried a coal-oil lamp attached to his harness. In some mines where the grade was considered too steep for the mule to pull a load, he was taught to push a car instead of pulling it. The number of cars pulled by a single mule varied. At the Oak Hill Colliery, near Pottsville, a certain mule was accustomed to pulling three cars at a time. He listened while the men coupled the cars, and if a fourth car was added, he balked. The men outwitted him, however, by making the fourth coupling in silence. There were sidings at intervals where trips going in opposite directions passed each other, and the boys exchanged "hello's." Drivers were sometimes crushed between coal cars, or between cars and pillars or props, or they might be bitten or kicked by vicious mules.

Mule drivers were the cock o' the walk wherever boy colliers gathered. Although some were eighteen or younger, they were already savoring the different brands of whiskey, smoking cigarettes or clay pipes, chewing tobacco, and handling a picturesque vocabulary. This was the tragic side of child labor in the anthracite industry in the old days—young boys were thrown into the adult world before either mind or character had prepared them for adult experiences.

The driver boy and his working companion in darkness, the mine mule, inspired much folklore—songs and ballads, legends and anecdotes. Driver boy and mule were on their way out as picturesque, but obsolescent, features of anthracite mining even before the industry had received its near-fatal blow from the Great Depression. Electric motors have now displaced them forever.

A foreman asked a Pennsylvania Dutch stable hand, "Have you shod that mule?" The employee replied that he hadn't but would do it right away. Shortly afterward a shot rang out. Thinking that he had just carried out an order, the stable hand reported officially that he had just shot the mule.

This anecdote is a canard. No group of people was better qualified by experience and tradition to take care of mules than the Pennsylvania Dutch. From the farm to a mule stable was an easy leap for them. Dr. Herring, my informant, was one of many Pennsylvania Dutch veterinarians who cared for mine mules. Dr. Irvin C. Newhart, a native of Allentown, was head of the veterinary department of the Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company for many years. Many stable bosses and drivers were also Pennsylvania Dutch.

Where there were mine mules, there one would be sure to find rats. When mule stables were maintained underground, rats lived by eating the hay provided for mules. Hungry rodents in vast numbers would invade a stable and overrun the mules' feedbox. When the mules tried to push them away with their noses, the rats turned on them with great ferocity and bit the mules around the nose and mouth. "I seen lots of times where the mules were ripped open from rats," said a former fire boss at the Maple Hill Colliery.

When mule stables were moved to the surface, or when electric motors displaced mules altogether, the rats changed targets from mules' feedboxes to miners' dinner cans. On idle days the rats lived on the bark of mine timber, but when a colliery resumed operation and the miners returned to the work faces, the hungry rodents were

there to welcome them. As a man sat down to eat, he saw several pairs of beady eyes peering at him out of the darkness not more than five feet away. The miners at first sought to drive them away, but they soon found that it was useless to do so. They were inhibited by that old belief that rats have an especially fine sense of impending disaster and will rush to leave a mine just ahead of a cave-in. Thus the presence of rats added to the miners' feeling of security. My fire-boss informant cited another reason for the miners making their peace with the mine rodents. "If you got a rat cornered, the son-of-a-gun he'd go for you," said the fire boss. "He'd make a leap at you, and maybe bite you. They have bitten men. So, if they don't bother you, you don't bother them." Based on this "live-and-let-live" philosophy, miners grew accustomed to sharing their lunch with their neighbor rats.

But the miners of Maple Hill Colliery many years ago had a way of making them dance for their lunch. Whenever there was a lull in mining, such as waiting for empty cars to be delivered to them, miners and young laborers put on "a dance of the mine rats." They laid a piece of sheet iron on two boards off the ground. Then they scattered bread and cake crumbs in the middle of the sheet iron, which attracted about half a dozen rats. At this point the men unwound a stick of electric wire and attached one end to the sheet iron and the other to the trolley wire overhead for electric power. There was not enough voltage to kill the rats, but it did torment them and burn their feet as they danced around and squealed to the men's delight. Lookouts were stationed in the gangway to guard against the unexpected approach of one of the bosses, for the men and boys knew that they would be fired if caught at this game.¹³

TRICKS—INSIDE AND OUTSIDE OF THE MINES

"It is customary among Pennsylvania Germans to play tricks upon others, both upon simple innocents and upon those who are proud in their own conceit," says an authority.¹⁴ This is true among the Pennsylvania Dutch in the anthracite region as in other parts of eastern Pennsylvania. Some of the tricks were brought over from Germany by eighteenth-century ancestors, while some were invented by Dutch miners.

Foreman Charles Solt remembers well his initiation as a mule driver in the Lytle Colliery. He was given a wild mule with a long chain trailing behind it. One of the driver boys hooked the chain to Solt's pants leg and with a stroke or two of his whip sent the mule racing down the gangway dragging a bewildered and frightened Charlie Solt behind him. Luckily, the mule came to a halt after about thirty feet. Had he continued to one hundred or two hundred feet, Solt might have been injured seriously.¹⁵

Mrs. Henry E. Wertz, Lincoln storekeeper, recalls a trick often played by a stable boss in the Lincoln Colliery. "Ed had a loose plank in his stable," said Mrs. Wertz, "and he fixed it so it went up and down. When a mule driver came into the stable for his mules, Ed asked him to stoop to pick up something he said he had dropped. As the boy did so, the plank came down on him and trapped him. Ed would have to release him from the trap."¹⁶

One form of hazing a greenhorn in the mines was to request him to do what experienced miners knew was impossible. Being new in the colliery and unfamiliar with mining terms and customs, a beginner could dig his own grave, in a manner of speaking. Ralph Kantner of Pine Grove tells the story of a miner putting up wooden props in his working place with a greenhorn's assistance. The miner looked at a prop and said, "This is too short," something impossible as these supports were carefully cut by expert timbermen and sawyers. Nevertheless it gave the miner a chance to have a little fun at the expense of his greenhorn. "Get that big hammer and we'll stretch the son-of-a-gun," ordered the miner. "Now hit 'im, hit 'im!" And the young laborer swung mightily to stretch the wooden prop. Finally, the miner signaled him to stop. "Now we'll put 'im up." The prop fit snugly in place. "Well, I'm a son of a gun," said the miner in feigned surprise. "I'm so old and I never thought I'd live to see a timber prop stretched."¹⁷

In regular anthracite mines, blasting was hazardous and required skill and experience. A miner had to know how to drill a hole in the seam and how to handle explosive cartridges. Today this work is performed by specialists, professional shot-firers. In the late twenties and early thirties when the West End mines were shut down suddenly, the displaced miners, to keep from starving, opened bootleg holes where coal was extracted without the protection of safety laws or any other mining laws. Any man could engage in this hazard-

ous work if he was desperate enough and had the necessary courage. Under the circumstances, experience counted for little.

One of the coal bootleggers was Charles "Mule" Haas, the ballad singer, then a very young man. As Mule tells the story, the miner for whom he was working gave him a drill and told him to drill, something he had never done before. "My gosh, I started drillin' right above me," recollected Haas. "'Say, Mule, don't drill above you,' shouted my boss. 'There ain't no coal there. That's the top.' Then I started drillin' underneath me, and the boss hollered, 'Not there, that's where you walk.' 'Well, whereabouts is the coal anyhow? There ain't none here, there ain't none there. Where is it?' 'Drill straight ahead.' I was there a whole week, and he didn't stop me. I kept on drillin' until he had to pull me and the drill out. I had drilled myself so far in the coal vein."

This was just one of Haas's funny experiences as a coal bootlegger. He has an especially vivid memory of his first day on the job, the greenest of greenhorns. The miner employing him ordered him to round up some timber dogs. [A timber dog is a mining term for a big hook used in dragging timber props from one place to another.] Having listened to radio shows depicting the Frontier West, Haas could think only of wild dogs roaming the nearby woods. He was not sure what good they would do inside a coal mine, but an order was an order, and so he went out on the great hunt. "I believe I must've been gone about an hour before comin' back—empty-handed," said Haas. "'No timber dogs.' The miner who was sittin' there smoking his pipe says, 'Well, Mule, I should 'a knowed better than to send a damn mule to find a timber dog.' 'Look,' says I, 'my eyes are twenty-twenty vision and I couldn't see no timber dogs. Besides, I'll be doggone if you need any dogs down here. You don't need dogs any more down here than I do.'"18

William W. Lewis, principal of the Trevorton High School, recalled memories of his youth in Trevorton, when "Jersey Mosquito" was played there. "In Jersey Mosquito," he explained, "you pick your intended victim, take him into a room, turn out the light, and then give him the works. Now the 'works' may mean pushing him around or slapping him, but did not go so far as bruising him or breaking any bones. In other words, Jersey Mosquito is a very entertaining game, a very abusive game, but not a destructive game. Now and then one of our elder citizens suggests playing it again, but the younger generation of today, after hearing stories about it from their parents, are afraid to say 'yes' when invited to play it."19

ELBEDRITSCH

THE TRICK with the oldest tradition behind it is known in the Pennsylvania Dutch dialect as *Elbedritsche Fange*, the chase and capture of a mythical creature, *Elbedritsch*, which may be either a bird or an animal. Brought over from Germany by the eighteenth-century ancestors of the present generation of Pennsylvania Dutch, the *Elbedritsche Fange* was played throughout eastern Pennsylvania. In the anthracite region, Pennsylvania Dutch boys sought greenhorns, or newcomers in their neighborhood, as their unsuspecting and credulous victims. It was a rather mean trick to play on a cold and frosty night. The following description was submitted for this collection by Edward Pinkowski of Philadelphia, son of a former anthracite miner, who was reared in the anthracite region:

Elbedritsch is the name of a Pennsylvania Dutch pastime, particularly among the young folks. I first heard about it in my family circle, but I didn't know it was called *Elbedritsch* until recently. Long before I was born, my grandfather, who had come from Poland in the middle 1890's and was in the great anthracite strike of 1902, married the second time to a Karowski girl of a coal miner's family in Mount Carmel. Her brother left the mines and moved with his wife and four children to a small farm along the Mahantongo near Weishample. The boys, Johnnie and Whitie, were young and not out of school yet when they were thrown headlong into the Pennsylvania Dutch farming district. They were probably the first Polish boys in the neighborhood. Anyway, a group of Pennsylvania Dutch boys took a liking to the younger of the two and invited him one night on a "snipe hunt." The white-haired kid from the streets of Mount Carmel never saw a snipe and went along for the fun. The boys took him up in the mountains, wholly unfamiliar to him, and were quite some distance from the country store at Weishample.

The only thing familiar to Whitie was his father's carbide lamp that cast grotesque shadows ahead of him. When the boys started to puff a little from climbing the mountainside, they stopped and handed Whitie a burlap bag. They told him to hold it open with the miner's lamp directly over it, while they scattered into the woods to drive snipe toward him. As soon as they saw the light, he was told, the birds would go for it and be caught in the bag.

The boys headed off into the woods in different directions. Whitie stood there with nobody to keep him company except the miner's lamp and the burlap bag. The night grew lonelier and

colder. Then the light of his lamp began to flicker, indicating that the carbide was just about used up and needed a refill. Unfortunately, he did not think that he was going to need it and did not bring extra carbide and water with him.

While he was considering what to do, the other boys quietly made it to the road between the new boy and Weishample. On the way home they laughed about the boy they left holding the bag in the woods. They knew that there were no snipes in the woods.

By the time Whitie knew it, the boys accepted him as one of the community. He married a Pennsylvania Dutch girl from the Mahantongo Valley and still lives there. Maybe the expression, "holding the bag" comes from this Pennsylvania Dutch hoax.

FOLK GAMES

In the West End, Pennsylvania Dutch boys of two or three generations ago improvised their own outdoor games. Many of them were strenuous, which accounted for their appeal to boys of the eight-to-fourteen age group. In the absence of a ball, a battered old tin can was used in a variety of games, the most popular being *Kessli* (kettle). The game was a favorite in Pine Grove, boyhood home of Arthur H. Henninger,²⁰ currently superintendent of Schuylkill County Public Schools. Mr. Henninger, who played the game as a boy, recalls that *Kessli* was too rough for girls, and they were not allowed to play it in the schoolyard. Generally, it was played after school in vacant lots. As the tin can was continually hit by the players' broomsticks, it grew smaller and smaller until it resembled more nearly the shape of a ball. Said Superintendent Henninger: "It could really whistle past you and give you a good bump if it happened to hit you." Following is essentially Mr. Henninger's recollection of the game:

KESSLI

AS BOYS we used to call this game *Kessli*, and it was based on a little song that we used to sing while we were playing the game:



Kess-li, Kess-li, rumm-bumm bumm! Waer ken Loch grickt iss zu dumm.

Kessli, Kessli, rumm-bumm, bumm!

*Waer ken Loch grickt iss zu dumm.*²¹

Kettle, kettle, rumm, bumm, bumm!

He who doesn't get a hole is so dumb (stupid).²²

We had a hole in the ground as near as possible to the center of the field, and then we had as many other holes in a circle about fifteen feet away from the center hole as there were players in the game, less one. We played the game this way:

All the boys had broomsticks, which were placed in the center hole, and then we moved around in a circle singing—

Kessli, Kessli, rumm-bumm, bumm!

Waer ken Loch grickt iss zu dumm.

All the players now left the center hole and put their broomsticks, or tried to put their broomsticks, into one or another of the holes in the outer circle. Since there was one hole less than the number of players, one of the boys was left without a hole into which to place his stick.

He was the *Kessli*. He had to bat a tin can through the ring of boys into the center hole to win. Of course, the other boys tried to keep his can away from that center hole. Everytime the *Kessli* succeeded in batting his tin can into the ring and within putting distance of the center hole, the other boys tried hard to knock the can out of the ring. When they attacked, their own individual holes were left unprotected. It was then that the *Kessli* tried to catch one of them off guard and take his hole away from him, and when he succeeded, the displaced boy took over the task of trying to reach the center hole. A round came to an end each time that the can was battered into the center hole. Then we put our broomsticks back into it and again went round and round in a circle, singing—

Kessli, Kessli, rumm-bumm, bumm!

Waer ken Loch grickt iss zu dumm.

Dr. Fred L. Herring, Pine Grove veterinarian, and Mrs. Herring, also recorded the *Kessli* tune and furnished details of the game.²³

A parallel to *Kessli* was described by Miss E. Louise Bigler, assistant librarian of the Pottsville Free Public Library:

Any number of boys can play this game. A ring is formed and one boy stands in the center. He holds a pole or a stick eight or ten feet high, and on it he has a can tied with a string fastened to the pole. The idea is that he swings it around his head, and the other boys in the ring, each with a club equally as high, try to hit it. The first one who misses three times is "it," and he goes in and holds the stick. They say that the boy in the middle sometimes gets pretty battered up, 'cause when the boys miss the can, they get him.²⁴

The same game was also played in Trevorton, Northumberland County, by breaker boys, mule skimmers, and door boys who not only lived dangerously, but played the game in the same manner. Here is how William W. Lewis remembers it from his own boyhood:²⁵

SHINNYING ON A POLE

WE CALLED the game, "Shinnying on a Pole." Now that's a peculiar name. You don't hear it today; in fact, it's died away. Here's how it was played:

The man who was "it," or the man who was caught, had to take the pole, ten to twelve feet high, to the center of the ring. On the top of the pole was a wire about fifteen or twenty feet long, and on the end of the wire was a tin can. Now you notice we did not have special equipment. We used tin cans. Our plaything was a tin can. Now the man in the center would swing this pole around. Any number can play the game except that the more playing it the more dangerous it is. The boys in the ring try to hit the swinging tin can with a club, baseball bat, stick, or what have you. After being worn down by many strokes of a club or bat, the wire breaks and the players have to duck to escape being hit by the flying tin can. I say it's a dangerous game. We don't advise young people today to practice that kind of game.²⁶

Another game described by Lewis from boyhood memory follows:

DUCK ON THE ROCK

PUT A CAN on a big rock, stand back ten to twenty feet and throw rocks at it, and if you succeed in knocking it off, of course

you go to base. If you don't succeed, well, you try again. And if you missed often enough you were "it." You had to throw the rocks back to the boy.²⁷

Lewis remembered still another boyhood activity, which was more a sport than a game. Here is how he describes it:

RIDING DOWN THE CULM BANK

NOW AT THE lower end of town we used to have culm banks anywhere from seventy to a hundred feet high. We, as young boys in this town, used to go to the colliery and get long pieces of sheet iron. We would curl the end up like a toboggan, put a wire on the back end of it, pull the sheet iron up to the top of the culm bank and then ride down on it. Now that was a lot of sport for us. If you ever rode on a piece of sheet iron down over a rough piece of ground you know what it's like. If you don't know, I can very easily tell you, or I can tell you how to find out. Get a large scoop shovel, pull it up to the top of a grass bank, maybe only ten or twenty feet high. Sit in that scoop shovel and ride down that grass bank. Next time you'll take a cushion along.²⁸

The public lamplighter making the rounds of the town with his ladder is a symbol of a way of life that is gone forever. The lamp-posts they tended created a custom in Pine Grove that was carried on after the installation of electric lights—the custom of boys and girls of the neighborhood getting together in the evenings under the mellow lamp light for games of all sorts. Pine Grove's well-remembered corners had distinctive names of their own—Achenbach's, Ley's, Schrom's and Christ's. The one best remembered by today's grandfathers and grandmothers was Ley's Corner where the "Me-go-She" gang would meet nightly to play Grizzly Bear, Foxie, and other rowdy games.²⁹

Pottsville had similar neighborhood corners and after supper, boys and girls were allowed to play there for an hour or two before bedtime. The following are some of the outdoor games they played, some remembered by Miss Bigler, some she has picked up from oral tradition.

BLUEBIRDS

THERE ARE ten players in "Bluebirds." Seven girls represent the seven days of the week. Three other girls take the roles of a mother, a wolf, and a daughter who is left in charge of the seven girls when their mother leaves them for a while. The wolf comes and carries off one of the children.

Then the daughter in charge of the girls starts calling, "Mother, Mother, the teakettle is boiling over."

And the mother says, "Take the dishcloth."

"Too cold," is the answer.

"Take the lifter."

"Too hot."

Then the mother says, "Well, I'll come myself." When she returns she says, "Where's my Tuesday?"

Well, the wolf has taken her. She tells them not to let him take any more of her children, but he does. Mother and the daughter in charge of the other girls go through the same dialogue every time the wolf carries off another child. The game ends with the seven girls chasing the wolf. The last one to get back to where the game originated has to be the wolf.³⁰

FORTY STRONG HORSES

ANY NUMBER of boys can play this game but it has to be an even number, half of them team horses and the other half riders. If eight are in the game, four represent horses, and four, riders. Through certain gestures they show four riders jumping on horses. If the riders stay on the horses, they win the game; but if they can't stay on, the horses win.³¹

DUMMY SCHOOL

THIS GAME is usually played on steps. One girl has a small object as, for instance, a stone, which is hidden in one hand. She holds

out both hands, and one girl after another is asked to guess which hand it is in. If you guess right, you are promoted and go up a step. Every time you guess right, you take one more step. The first girl to get to the top step wins the game.³²

HALF PAST

ANY NUMBER of girls can play this guessing game. Two girls decide on an hour from one to twelve, and the rest of the group are each asked to guess that hour. The girl who guesses correctly wins. The two original girls leave the group and think up a reward for the winner. One represents herself as diamonds, and the other as pearls (any object can be used). They go back to the girl who has guessed the right hour and they ask which she would prefer, diamonds or pearls. If she says "diamonds," she goes out with the girl representing diamonds, and if she says "pearls," she goes out with the other girl. Then they come back. The guessing goes on and on until the hours from one to twelve are used up.³³

STATUES

ANY NUMBER of girls can play this game. One girl swings the rest of the girls, one by one. Each girl, when she falls to the ground, freezes like a statue where she lands. If a girl moves before all the girls are swung, the game starts over again, with the one who moved as the new swinger. If no one moves, the original swinger repeats her game. As it is more fun to be swung than to be the swinger, each girl does her best not to move.³⁴

ORCHESTRA

BOTH GIRLS and boys play this game. You can sit down anywhere on steps. Each player represents a different musical instrument. If you represent a clarinet, then you try to make a sound like that of

a clarinet. If you are a drum, you make a noise like a drum. One player represents an orchestra conductor. When he gives the signal to play a number, the various participants imitate the musical instruments they represent. Sometimes it is quite funny, but the players must not laugh. The first one to do so is out, and becomes the orchestra conductor.³⁵

BUTTER

THE GAME of "Butter" was played by girls, but sometimes they were joined by boys. The two principals are a storekeeper and a buyer who, usually, were represented by the two biggest children. The other players represent tubs of butter in the store. The girls stoop low in a sitting position without touching the ground, and their arms are akimbo. The storekeeper takes the buyer around the store and lets her taste of each of the tubs of butter; this is demonstrated by the buyer pretending to take a taste of the top of each player's head. When she has found the right tub of butter, the buyer says that she wants to buy five pounds of it. So the storekeeper and the buyer each take an arm and swing the lucky girl five times, or for as many times as the number of pounds being bought. The point of the game is that the girls representing tubs of butter may not touch the ground or fall over, otherwise they are out. The girl who is swung must maintain her statue-like position until the end of the game. The game is over when all the butter is sold.³⁶

LEGENDS AND TRADITIONS

THE ETERNAL HUNTER

FEW OLD GERMAN LEGENDS HAVE CAPTURED THE IMAGINATION OF THE Pennsylvania Dutch in the anthracite region as has "The Eternal Hunter," which, in German, is known as *Ewige Jaeger*, and in the Pennsylvania Dutch dialect as *Dar Ewich Jaejer* (there are other variations according to phonetic spellings). I recorded two versions in Pine Grove and, had time permitted, could have caught several others on my magnetic tape.

When sounds suggesting a phantom pack in full cry were heard on an otherwise quiet night in the fall hunting season, people looked up into the sky and remarked that the eternal hunter was riding again. Often they faced the Blue Mountain which they believed was haunted by the eternal hunter. But in German folklore, this legend, still current in South Germany, according to Dr. Herbert Beck, is associated with "the restless soul of some riotous huntsman doomed to follow the hounds through eternity."¹

The Brendle-Troxell collection, *Pennsylvania German Folk Tales*, gives four versions collected in eastern Pennsylvania. Concerning them, the collectors make the following observation: "Two distinct traditions are represented by these stories. The first has to do with

a spirit of the air, the second with the maker of an unfulfilled vow."²

The August 26, 1949, issue of the *West Schuylkill Press* and *Pine Grove Herald* carried the following item:

A TALE FROM THE PAST

The Avich Yeager Hunted Vicinity

by A. P. O'Dake³

From sources that are not only reliable but where superstition is discounted by scientific reasoning, comes information that it must have been the "Avich Yeager" that passed over the northern side of the beautiful Paradise Valley in the early part of August.

Positive proof is the fact that not only was the barking of hounds clearly and distinctly heard in the sky, but the many deer that roamed this valley have now completely vanished, probably driven away.

The story is that many generations ago, on the other side of the Blue Mountain, after a long dry summer, the crops failed, streams were waterless, and all wildlife left the vicinity, and as a result the early settlers were left in dire circumstances. As venison was their only source of meat, one of the old men decided to use his dogs to hunt and chase back the much-needed deer. Before entering the wilderness, he informed his people that he would hunt forever, even through the sky, if necessary, to save the settlement from starvation. After he had been gone a few days, the deer came back but the old man never returned.

A. P. O'Dake was the nom de plume of J. Hampton Haldeman, a Pine Grove pharmacist, who takes a keen interest in the folklore of the West End. I brought my recording machine to the rear of his drugstore where he recorded the legend in the following manner:

It's an old story that dates back probably three hundred years. It seems that at that time the summer had been very, very dry. The creeks were practically waterless. The crops failed, and naturally, the game—deer and rabbits—crossed over the mountain; that is, the other side of these Blue Mountains. The villagers were in dire circumstances. Venison was a cheap source of food. One of the old men decided that he would take his dogs, go across the mountain, and chase back the deer to save this community of Pine Grove. When he left he said he would hunt forever, if necessary, even through the sky, to chase the deer back. And that is one reason why late at night in the fall you hear noises in the sky, the sounds of barking, and the report of shotgun fire. That is the story of the Ewich Yeager. He's hunting forever through the sky.⁴

The late Mrs. Charles (Sophia) Bailer of Tremont, well known as a powwower, ballad singer, and storyteller, gave the following version to the Schuylkill County unit of the WPA, as reported by the late Christ Geiger, one of its reporters:

Der Aivich Yaeger (The Mighty Hunter). Her mother related to her often that at certain times, especially in the fall, she had seen this ghost glide through the heavens at night in the form of a man garbed in hunter's attire. Not only was he visible, but she also related that she could plainly hear him blowing his hunter's horn to his dogs.

Irvin J. Leffler of Pine Grove, who was eighty-three in 1957 when I interviewed him, had another version of the eternal hunter:

This is an old story, you know, of a hunter who lived years ago. A fox hunter he was. So he kept on chasing this fox until he died. And he cursed and made an oath that he'd get that fox if he had to chase him into eternity, you know. Long after he was dead, why, he was chasing the fox. And each time the people heard the sound of dogs barking along the [Blue] mountain they thought that the hunter had come back from the other world to try to get that fox. Oh, the sound was heard probably thirty times a year, sometimes it was worse than other times. It seems the hunter was doomed to chase the fox but not to catch him.⁵

What gave rise to the unearthly sounds that led a poetic people to associate them with the eternal hunter? Irvin Leffler said that the people heard the eternal hunter more frequently in the days of the Pine Grove branch of the Union Canal than they do now. He explained that those sounds, so much like a pack of hounds baying in the sky, came from flocks of loons that visited the canal from time to time. In the night it was not difficult to imagine the sounds coming from the Blue Mountain only a short distance from Pine Grove.

Professor Herbert Beck states that the Canada goose was called the *Awicher Yager* because of its "clanging note, which in the mass and in the night suggests a pack in full cry," thus associating it with the old German legend.⁶

IN THE WAKE OF THE MOLLY MAGUIRES

Black Thursday, June 21, 1877, stands out in anthracite history for the mass hangings that doomed the Molly Maguires as a disrupting

factor in the hard coal industry. Ten men convicted of murder—six in Pottsville and four in Mauch Chunk—went to the gallows on that day.

Seventy years later the Reading Company unlocked a steel chest in its Philadelphia vaults to make available to historians some very old documents bearing on the tragic period that had led to the executions. "The newly-discovered evidence," reported the *New York Times* of December 7, 1947, under a Philadelphia date line, "tends to show that the 'Molly Maguires' were considerably less black than painted."

That news story provides a significant bit of evidence that public opinion has mellowed toward the Molly Maguires without condoning their misdeeds.

This point is made by James J. Corrigan in the first of a series of eighteen articles representing original research on the Molly Maguires, published in the *Anthracite Tri-District News*, Wilkes-Barre, beginning June 8, 1951: "Through the truth-screening process in the passage of the years, the pendulum of public opinion with reference to the Molly Maguires swung in reverse. Gradually, public opinion, though continuing decidedly out of sympathy with the deeds attributed to the Mollies, at least began to view that ugly era with a calmer and saner judgment . . . with an eye unclouded by contemporary prejudices."

Franklin B. Gowen's biographer, Marvin W. Schlegel, reflects this change in public attitude as he summarizes his subject's intimate association with the Molly Maguire legend: "His dramatic address to the jury in the Munley trial fixed the outlines of the story for posterity and forever identified him with the Molly Maguires. The romantic appeal of McParlan's adventures has kept Gowen's name alive more than anything else. Yet the Molly trials and their aftermath of the reign of the coal and iron police were among the least creditable incidents of his life. His campaign for law and order pushed justice to its farthest limits and even beyond. Jack Kehoe, however bloodstained his hands may have been, was almost certainly innocent of the crimes for which he was hanged. Tom Duffy and Jim Carroll died for a murder with which they had little to do, while Jimmy Kerrigan and Kelly the Bum suffered not at all for their notorious crimes. Still, it must be remembered that Gowen, for all his theatrical posturing, sincerely believed the charges he flung at the Hibernians."⁷

Irvin Leffler, expressed it this way: "There's a story in their [the Mollies'] favor and there's a story against them. The story in their favor is told and the people know it, but they don't know what's their defense, you know."⁸

I found little bitterness toward the Mollies among the Pennsylvania Dutch in Schuylkill County whom I interviewed in 1957. Their ancestors, though innocent bystanders, had suffered from Molly Maguire lawless acts. The best-remembered victim was a Tamaqua policeman, Benjamin Yost, who was fatally wounded while putting out street lights on July 5, 1875. Five men were convicted and subsequently hanged for this murder. At their trial, the first Molly Maguire murder trial held in Schuylkill County, the presiding judge was Cyrus L. Pershing. Some of the lawyers for the Commonwealth and the defendants were Pennsylvania Dutchmen.⁹

In the selection of a jury, both sides maneuvered to get Pennsylvania Dutchmen. One of the panel, William Becker, said, "I am light on English; I would not understand the witnesses." The defense lawyers challenged him, but the court allowed him to take a seat in the jury box anyway.¹⁰ At a previous murder trial in Mauch Chunk, that of Michael J. Doyle, the same defense lawyers pursued an opposite course. Then they believed that, having difficulty understanding English, the Dutch jurymen would vote to free Doyle. It did not work out that way.¹¹

To understand the Molly Maguires, one should study them against the background of the general unrest then prevalent in the country. What made the situation unique in the anthracite region was that, there, conflicting currents—social, economic, industrial, racial, and religious—met head on.

The emergence of finance capitalism, which created giant corporations and put many independents out of business, engendered the evils of overexpansion, monopoly, and absentee ownership that only intensified bad times for the miners. *Laissez faire* was rampant. The miners sank deeper into poverty, degradation, and despair until the gulf between them and the employing class, including white-collar employees, became unbridgeable. Added to other provocations was one aimed directly at Irish Catholic miners—namely, discrimination at the collieries practiced by English and Welsh Protestant mine bosses. The first miners' trade union of the period, the Workingmen's Benevolent Association, formed in 1863 with John Siney as president, had

to disguise itself as a fraternal and beneficial society.¹² Consequently, the anthracite region was fertile ground for the growth of secret societies, such as the "Buckshots" and "Sleepers" that flourished in the 1850's. Fitting into this eery atmosphere of mystery and intrigue were the Molly Maguires, a term lost in Irish legendry, which entered anthracite regional folklore early in the Civil War.

It may be taken for granted that not all the culprits were Molly Maguires. In such a chaotic time when men were driven to desperation by conditions, there must have been some who, motivated by revenge or the desire to steal, acted entirely on their own initiative. It was the pattern of their crimes, wholly foreign to the American scene, that gave the Molly Maguires away. This pattern is believed to have come down from the Defenders or Whiteboys (interchangeable terms for members of the secret Ribbon Societies of Ireland) who, early in the nineteenth century, had championed the cause of Irish peasants against their absentee English landlords.¹³ There was a difference: In the Pennsylvania hard-coal fields, the Mollies' objectives were industrial in character rather than agrarian; on both sides of the ocean there was an admixture of politics. Like the Ribbonmen, Pennsylvania's Molly Maguires functioned without a central authority. Power was vested in autonomous divisions of the Ancient Order of Hibernians that the Mollies temporarily controlled in Schuylkill and several other anthracite counties.

The pattern consisted in sending crude warnings termed "coffin notices" to intimidate; attacks from ambush upon lone travelers in remote areas; gang assaults on individuals, many of them mining officials, out of revenge or for robbery; burning colliery buildings, wrecking bridges, and overturning coal trains. Murder and lesser crimes sometimes resulted from clandestine barter between Molly leaders of one county and those of another. Thus, perpetrators were often strangers in the locality where they carried out nefarious plots, making identification by eyewitnesses difficult. When they were arrested, bail was immediately posted for them. To communicate with one another in public, the Mollies had a code of secret signs, toasts, quarreling toasts, general passwords, and night passwords, all known collectively as "the goods," and these were changed periodically.

Some of the crimes with which Molly Maguires were charged reflected the class struggle, yet they were far from being the labor martyrs that the Communists have tried to make them. These Mollies, although coal miners, lacked class and social consciousness, as indi-

cated by their many misdeeds that had no relation to the issues dividing most miners from the employing class. They were deeply involved in township and county politics, and were parties to political corruption. Some were charged with holdups and house robberies. Their victims and near-victims were not exclusively mining officials.¹⁴ They were charged with assaulting or attempting to assault fellow mineworkers among whom were Irish Catholics. Some of the more notorious Molly leaders were saloonkeepers who ruled with a rod of iron.

Molly Maguires represented a very small minority of the region's Irish Catholic population, yet their misdeeds were such as to cast a shadow on all persons of their nationality and religion. In every mine patch little dramas were played out that seldom reached the outside world—dramas in which the law-abiding, God-fearing majority, aided by their priests, fought the Molly Maguires in their midst.¹⁵ At the same time this lawless element (most of them belonged to the W.B.A. because during the union's heyday there was a closed shop at many collieries) discredited the organized labor movement.

Siney and other W.B.A. leaders bent every effort to discourage their members from committing overt acts of any kind. Various branches of the union posted rewards for the arrest and conviction of those responsible for damaging mine property and assaulting mining officials. Their efforts seem to have had the desired effect, as there was a marked drop in the crime rate between 1868, when the W.B.A. came into existence, and 1870. In the latter year, the union suffered a setback, and violence flared up anew. However, from 1871 to 1874 the anthracite region enjoyed a spell of comparative peace and order.¹⁶ It is reasonable to assume that if the W.B.A. had been allowed to exist, it would have been a force for moderation. However, the coal operators, led by Franklin B. Gowen, were determined to crush it, and crush it they did with the help of the dreaded coal and iron police, which had state police powers even though employed by the coal corporations. When the "long strike" of 1875 petered out, Gowen reported to his stockholders that the company "had rid itself of the last vestiges of trade unionism."¹⁷

Behind this fanatical zeal in prosecuting the Molly Maguires was his real aim: to destroy the miners' union. As autocratic head of the most powerful coal-and-railroad corporation, he permitted nothing to stand in the way of his visionary schemes of expansion and monopoly that ultimately bankrupted his company.

Molly Maguire murder trials were held in quick succession during the summer and fall of 1876. With monotonous routine, one trial after another ended in guilty verdicts. Public hysteria, whipped up mostly by Gowen, provided the backdrop for the trials, and the selection of impartial juries was all but impossible. Guilt by association was an important factor in cases where the specific evidence was weak. McParlan's own testimony, extraordinarily detailed and shocking, was corroborated mostly by notorious accomplices who won immunity for their own crimes by testifying for the state. McParlan's good faith was questioned by defense lawyers who argued that the Pinkerton detective could have prevented some of the crimes as, according to his own testimony, he was present at the scene of some of the clandestine plotting.¹⁸

THE DAY THEY HANGED PAT HESTER

The same oral process by which Jesse James, Billy the Kid, and the other bad men of the wild West became folk characters is resurrecting the memory of Pat Hester who was hanged for murder in Columbia County in 1878. Hester, a saloonkeeper in Locust Gap, Northumberland County, and a bodymaster of the Molly Maguires, has inspired a cycle of anecdotes that are circulating in Schuylkill, Northumberland, and other counties. One reason for the revival of his name may be the fact that, though he was a troublemaker and had a prison record, he played a comparatively minor part in the murder case that sent him to the gallows, and that his conviction rested on the testimony of a squealer, "Kelly the Bum," one of the most depraved criminals of the period, who was later freed.

Hester was one of three Mollies hanged for the murder of Alexander W. Rea, paymaster of the Locust Mountain Coal and Iron Company, whose bullet-ridden body was found along the Centralia - Mount Carmel road on Sunday, October 18, 1868. The next year two young Irishmen were tried and acquitted of this murder, and Patrick Hester, the third suspect, was released without a trial for lack of evidence.

This crime was unsolved for about seven years until Daniel Kelly, nicknamed Kelly the Bum, serving a term for larceny in the Schuylkill County prison at Pottsville, revealed that he had participated in it. He offered to turn state's evidence in return for immunity, and the Commonwealth accepted. Kelly's confession implicated Patrick

Tully and Peter McHugh as among the killers, and Patrick Hester as an accessory before the fact. All three were arrested and lodged in the small Columbia County jail at Bloomsburg, a farm-and-iron town along the Susquehanna River.

The burden of the evidence offered by the Commonwealth, mainly through Kelly's testimony, was that Paymaster Rea was murdered after the conspirators had failed to find the Coal Ridge Colliery payroll on him. Robbery of that payroll amounting to about eighteen thousand dollars had been the motive for the crime. The killers stole Rea's gold watch and deprived him of his pocketbook containing about seventy dollars which they divided among themselves. There was no evidence of Pat Hester's having been at the scene of the crime or of his having accepted a share of the blood money extracted from the victim. The jury believed Kelly the Bum's testimony that Hester had been in a saloon where the plot to murder Rea was hatched.

The trial of Hester, McHugh, and Tully started on February 7, 1877, and lasted about three weeks, but the jury brought in a verdict of guilty in short order. When the legal resources for delay of execution were exhausted, March 25, 1878, was set as the day of the hangings. The gallows, on which four Mollies had been hanged previously, was borrowed from the Carbon County prison and erected in the western corner of the old jailyard. At the appointed time, the three doomed men died on those gallows. Today the site is occupied by the playing field of Bloomsburg High School.¹⁹

These gory events took place a long time ago, and few persons are still alive who can remember them from firsthand knowledge. One of them, Mrs. Howard Kahler, Sr., was eighty-seven years old when I interviewed her in 1958. Although only a child at the time of the trial and triple hangings, she was in a unique position to see much and hear even more from her mother and other adults. Born in Bloomsburg in 1870, she lived in the town until 1902 and so absorbed the folklore that grew out of the tragic events.²⁰ Like so many elderly persons do, Mrs. Kahler repeated herself as she told her story into my microphone, but what she recollected was interesting and significant, told in a voice clear and firm despite her age. The recording was made outdoors, in front of the home of Mr. and Mrs. Howard Kahler, Jr., her son and daughter-in-law with whom she lived, surrounded by members of her family and a friend, James P. Bressler of Williamsport, who had arranged for the recording. Following is her narrative:

The day the trial opened, oh! there was lots of excitement, and the coal and iron police were on duty all over the town. There were lots of strangers in town. There were an awful lot of strangers. There was a feeling of tension in the town. We were very much afraid that they'd blow up the jail.

I seen those Mollies [Hester, McHugh, and Tully] every day. Sheriff Hoffman²¹ and his family lived there in the jailhouse. The sheriff had three children, two girls and a boy. I played in the jail corridor with the youngest, Lizzie, who had had infantile paralysis and it had left her quite lame. She was then ten or twelve but small and terribly, terribly afflicted. They [the Molly prisoners] were locked up away from the other prisoners on one side of the jail behind iron doors. Each cell door had a little slide in the center through which Pat Hester and the other two could look out and we could look in. They didn't mind us youngsters playing in the hall, but if a stranger come through, that wicket would just be shut as quick as it could be. Then you didn't see nothing in there at all. They wasn't on show.

There was a basement kitchen. Mrs. Hoffman, the sheriff's wife, cooked for the prisoners, but she generally had somebody around to help her. The prisoners were served separately by the police on duty there. The old jail was a funny concern, but it was a jail anyhow. There's a school built right on the site of the old jail.

I don't remember Tully and McHugh but for their pallor. They were very, very bleached out, and they seemed to be in deep thought all the time. Tully was a little short man, but he was stockily built. He was true Irish. You could see it all over his face. And, of course, the priest was there all the time. He talked with them and done what he could for them.

And then there was Kelly. He was the fellow that done the squealing. He turned state's evidence, you know, and they gave him a lot of privileges. Kelly the Bum we called him. They locked him up for his own protection. If they [the Mollies] would have got hold of him it would have been no Kelly. There wouldn't have been [anything] left of him to be showed.

And I can remember Pat Hester. He was an awfully nice-looking man. He was short and stockily built, and he had the blackest hair and the blackest eyes and the prettiest red cheeks. He was what we would call handsome, and he was as pleasant as he could be. But there was no feeling in the town he was innocent. This plot to kill the paymaster was hatched in his saloon [Donahue's]. There was no sympathy for him amongst the Protestant people in the town because he took that man's life.

I remember Pat Hester's wife. I can remember her as well as can be, and I was nothing but a kid then. She brought food to her husband, but it was carefully examined before it was given to him. Her hair was as black as it could be, and her eyes were just snapping, and she was a pleasant woman, and Mrs. Hoffman [the

sheriff's wife] and the Hoffman family all loved and respected her. They all felt sorry for her.

The morning of the execution she was there at the jail. She had stayed at the Exchange Hotel. She went to give him good-bye. Her parting words were: "Die like a man, Pat." She kissed him and said, "Die like a man, Pat." I did not hear that myself as I was only a child, but my mother was up there [the jailhouse] a lot with Mrs. Hoffman and she heard it from her.²²

Franklin B. Gowen who had provided the hangman offered Mrs. Hester a special train in which to take Pat's body home to Locust Gap.

JOHN KEHOE, KING OF THE MOLLIES

Until he, too, was hanged, John Kehoe was Schuylkill County's most powerful Molly. They called him "Black Jack" Kehoe or "King of the Mollies." He was county delegate of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, a position of power and influence. His political power reached all the way into the state capital.

His prominence made him a prime target of Gowen and his followers, especially after he had seen through the disguise of their principal detective, James McParlan, alias Jim McKenna, and secretly plotted his death.

On March 9, 1877, Kehoe went on trial at Pottsville for the fatal beating of a mine docking boss, Frank Langdon, on June 14, 1862. After a lapse of approximately fourteen years from the time the murder was committed to the opening of the trial, the memories of witnesses had dimmed. Of four other men tried for this crime, two were acquitted and two were convicted of murder in the second degree. Only Kehoe was found guilty of murder in the first degree. The Commonwealth attorneys had pinned their hope for conviction on a threat that Kehoe was alleged to have made during a drunken brawl with Langdon three weeks prior to the fatal assault: "You son of a bitch, I'll kill you before long, for you're only robbing the people here by your docking."²³ The prosecution argued that this remark proved premeditation.²⁴ A conviction followed.

Kehoe, whose influence in Harrisburg had won pardons for some of his Molly friends, was unable to win one for himself and so, after exhausting his court appeals, he died on the gallows on December 18, 1878. Governor Hartranft had "grave doubts" regarding Kehoe's guilt, but his attorney general ruled that he would still have to sign

the prisoner's death warrant. And he did. "I never believed he would do it," commented Kehoe.²⁵

Black Jack Kehoe has also inspired posthumous stories about himself, some of which are told by a distant relative, John C. Kehoe, Sr., of Pittston. The living Kehoe is a political leader, coal operator, and publisher of the *Pittston Sunday Dispatch*. In his column, "As Kehoe Knows It," published April 3, 1960, he discussed Black Jack Kehoe. Following are excerpts:

I've . . . been asked many times if Jack Kehoe, better known as "Black Jack," king of the Mollie Maguires, was a relative of ours. He was a relative and lived in Girardsville, a little mining town in Schuylkill county. When I was a wholesale liquor dealer I used to sell goods in Girardsville to Patty Foy, who was married to Jack Kehoe's daughter. I used to ride the street car from Girardsville to Shenandoah and Charlie Kehoe, Black Jack's son, was the conductor. I learned a lot from Charlie about the Mollie Maguires. One time Charlie showed me a silver watch that his father gave to him before he was hanged in Pottsville jailyard.

Jack Kehoe, the king of the Mollies, conducted a saloon in a little old house in Girardsville. I saw the saloon many times over 50 years ago when I traveled through there selling goods. Detective McParlan,²⁶ a coal company detective, was afraid of Black Jack Kehoe.

One day McParlan was in Jack's barroom drinking with some other Mollies and Black Jack invited McParlan upstairs to hold a conference. Jack came down to the bar to get two drinks of liquor, one for himself and the other for McParlan. Kehoe put some paris green poison into McParlan's drink. Later Jack was called downstairs to the barroom and McParlan tossed his liquor out of the window. If he drank the paris green there never would've been a Mollie hanged.

On the morning Black Jack was scheduled to be hanged in Pottsville, his mother walked from Girardsville to Pottsville, a distance of nine miles in snow above her hips to plead for his life to be spared, but her plea fell on deaf ears and they strung him up.

BRACED FOR TROUBLE

MRS. GREGG G. BOVEE, of Pennsylvania Dutch descent, was in her seventy-seventh year when I interviewed her at her home in Williamsport on June 28, 1938. Self-supporting, jolly and lively, she fully belied her advanced age. The following anecdote about the Molly

Maguires emerged from an afternoon's reminiscences and rich memories of old times in the anthracite region:

Dad was a little boy when his father died, and he was raised by Grandmother Love. He went to work picking slate in the breaker of the old Keystone Colliery, which was located between Lavelle and Locustdale. He was only thirteen then. He had an accident in the breaker and they had to amputate his left leg below the knee. He wore a wooden leg and from then on everybody called him "Peg Leg" Louis Love. He learned to play the fiddle and got to be pretty good at it, and was in demand for weddings and other social events in the mining community. One evening in the seventies when Dad was about thirty-five, he was playing for a dance in a saloon patronized by miners and their wives when Molly Maguires broke into the place, and started a free-for-all. Dad often told me the story of how he got into a corner, braced himself on his wooden leg, and swung a club; when the Mollies came near him he let them have it.²⁷

MOLLY DANCERS

HARRY MURPHY, eighty years of age at the time of the interview in 1957, was born in Donaldson and has lived there all his life. He quit school at the age of eleven for a job as a slate picker in the breaker of East Franklin Colliery. He was one of the first miners to join the United Mine Workers of America and is a charter member of the Donaldson local union. He was a member of the U.M.W.A. District No. 9 Board for thirty-five years. Following is his Molly Maguire anecdote:

Me father often told us about this. He went to a dance one night near Branchdale. Women and men in working clothes were dancing to Irish tunes played by an old Irish fiddler. The other dancers were talking Irish which me father couldn't understand. The fiddler was a friend of me father's and he called him outside and said, "They're all Mollies having this dance," and the two of 'em, me father and the fiddler, they dusted out o' the place.²⁸

DRINKS ON THE HOUSE

ANTHONY MC ANDREW and his wife were returning from Ashland to the Rapp (Rappahannock, a small mining patch near Girards-

ville), a distance of approximately five miles. McAndrew was carrying a hundred of flour on his back. At a saloon on the road, McAndrew stopped to have a drink, and leaving Mrs. McAndrew outside to watch the flour, entered the place. It was filled with Mollies, the place being a meeting place of the secret order. When McAndrew ordered the drink, the saloonkeeper gave everybody in the place a drink at the same time, and when McAndrew attempted to pay for his own drink, was told the drink just served to all the others had been charged to him, McAndrew. When [he] asked what the cost was, he was informed it totalled \$20. McAndrew knew there was no use of his making a protest against this high-handed business, as he had been very outspoken against the Mollies at a previous time and knew that had he protested or refused to pay that he would have suffered bodily injury or possibly worse.²⁹

ALL'S WELL

EDWARD LIPPINCOTT BULLOCK, a Quaker, was superintendent of a Beaver Brook mine and lived at Audenried, Luzerne County, from 1870 to 1904. During the Molly Maguire trouble he, like other mine bosses, received several skull and crossbones and coffin notices, though no violence was ever offered him.

Edith Patterson recalls being told by Bullock's sister, Alice, and his daughter, Mrs. Harold K. Beecher, that in the troubled times a watchman patrolled their grounds at night calling up "All's Well" through a speaking tube into Bullock's bedroom.³⁰

FOLK SONGS AND BALLADS



AMERICAN COAL MINERS OF BRITISH AND IRISH DESCENT EXPRESSED PROTEST in diverse literary ways. In the 1870's one of them chalked the following verses on the face of a smooth expanse of anthracite in the gangway of the Beaver Brook Mine near Hazleton:

One day when the devil was walking about,
He wanted a man who was heavy and stout
To look after the pumps and the engines in Hell,
And take charge of the imps and young devils as well.

He told me his errand and asked my advice,
I mentioned Tom Davis*, and he said in a trice:
"He's the man that I want; your head is quite level,
So inform all his friends, he is off with the devil."¹

During World War I, when the pressure was on for every possible ton of coal, production was delayed at Old Ben No. 8 (one of the largest collieries in southern Illinois). By an old agreement between the local union and management, miners who had completed their quota of work would be hoisted at nine thirty in the morning and at two o'clock in the afternoon. As men and coal used the same cage, every load of men hoisted displaced so much coal tonnage. Even

* A local mine boss.

with mine committee co-operation, the superintendent, a man named Dunne, could not persuade the miners to remain voluntarily at their working places until quitting time at four o'clock in the afternoon. In desperation, Dunne put out an order that, except in cases of injury or illness, men thereafter would be hoisted only at twelve noon and at the end of the shift. The miners were incensed, and early the next afternoon a loaded coal car reached the surface bearing the following message chalked on the side:

I'll have you know, Mr. Dunne,
That with this car my day is done.
If you don't like my work or poem,
You can go to hell, I'm going home!²

In the West End of Schuylkill County, a miner in the 1870's scrawled a rhymed screed on a scrap of paper which he nailed to a tree:

One morning of late as I chanced for to stray,
To the Falls of Swatara I straight took my way.
But ere I reached them what was my dismay
To meet with Jim Lloyd, the boss, sir.

Cursing and swearing and damning the mines,
Likewise the poor miners to the flames he consigns.
But little he thought one would make a few lines
To bridle his tongue like a horse, sir.³

In St. Gabriel's Cemetery, Hazleton, a pioneer anthracite miner's tombstone bears the following epitaph:

Fourty years I worked with pick & drill
Down in the mines against my will,
The Coal Kings slave, but now it's passed;
Thanks be to God I am free at last.⁴

Interesting is the fact that these stray verses were often memorized by miners and recited in saloons and other places. Thus they entered into oral circulation to become folklore. Invariably, they were the work of Irish or British miners.

How about the Pennsylvania Dutch miners—did they also protest in this way? What was their contribution to the folk song tradition of the anthracite region to which I called attention in 1927 through my first book, *Songs and Ballads of the Anthracite Miner*?

Before supplying these answers, a brief review of the folk song tradition is required.

This tradition was dying out by the time I stumbled upon it in 1924 amid circumstances I have already described in previous publications.⁵ Some of the most active participants, though advanced in age, were still alive and able to sing their mining songs from memory and supply firsthand information about the folk song tradition. One of the significant facts gleaned from those aging informants was that they were continuing something that had been carried on in the British coal fields since early in the nineteenth century. Lacking documentary proof of this folk-cultural tie, I defined what I had stumbled upon in these restrained terms: "The miners were mostly Irish, Welsh, English and Scottish, and the form of the ballads in the present collection were [sic] apparently influenced by those which they had sung back home."⁶

Authoritative documentation of the tie between the two mining folk song traditions waited until 1952 when A. L. Lloyd's collection of British coal mining ballads, *Come All Ye Bold Miners*, was published in London. In his introduction, Lloyd states that "the greater part of the ballads [*i.e.*, in his book] belong . . . in the first half of the nineteenth century."

In his back notes, Lloyd cites at least a half dozen titles that are variants of ballads that he had found in my published compilations—further proof of the relationship between the two traditions. Some of the anthracite mining balladists were themselves emigrants from the British coal fields between 1840 and 1890. To their new homes they carried not only their mining experience and the spirit and technique of trade unionism, but also some of their traditional folk songs and ballads. The indigenous ballads created on new soil by them and their successors during the latter half of the nineteenth century showed a strong British and Irish influence.

The anthracite industry was not unique in having a folk song tradition; the same thing was happening in the sprawling bituminous industry and in other basic industries during the Industrial Revolution. However, work songs in which rhythm is attuned to the movement of work performance are missing from the anthracite tradition. Instead we have songs and ballads *about* work, which are more often sung above ground than below in the coal mines. Their manner of rhyming and their metric pattern were often modeled on that type of narrative song commonly identified as "come-all-ye" because of its characteristic opening phrase. These songs were sold by itinerants in the form of broadsides on the streets of ancient England and Ireland.

The ballad style and the thread of Irish idiom and melody are conspicuous in the fabric of American industrial balladry. Irish immigrant workingmen pioneered in many American industries. They felled timber in virgin forests; dug canals; built railroads; mined coal, iron ore, gold, silver, and copper; forged iron and steel; drilled oil wells and performed other manual labor tasks during America's period of momentous industrial expansion in the nineteenth century. And wherever they went, these sturdy sons of Erin carried their fiddles and fiddle tunes, their jigs, reels and hornpipes, their Irish songs and ballads, their wit and humor, their narrative skill, and the ability to make ballads based on their own experiences in the new world. A characteristic opening stanza of an indigenous industrial ballad follows:

Come all ye true born Irishmen wherever you may be,
I hope you'll attention pay and listen unto me;
It's of those true born Irishmen that left their native clay
To seek their destination here in America.⁷

A singer's craft or the industry he worked in was identified by first lines of ballads such as these:

Come all ye jolly *raftsmen*, I pray you lend an ear.
Come all you rambling *sailor lads* and listen unto me.
Come all you jolly *railroad men*, and I'll sing you if I can.
Come all ye jolly *miners* who love to hear a song.
Come all you *iron workers* and listen to my song.

Traditionally, industrial ballads were sung solo and often without pause between stanzas; exceptions were in the cases of individual singers suffering from anthracosis, or "miner's asthma," which required frequent stopping for breath. Accompaniment was rare, but sometimes a fiddle was played in unison. The folk singer repeated a refrain or chorus after each stanza, or only after the first and last stanzas, depending on the available time and the audience's mood. He would drop to a speaking voice on the final phrases to indicate the end of his ballad.

Industrial ballads made small use of detail because, like the newspaper, they catered to a public that demanded only the major facts about an event that was still of topical interest. Ballads were quickly learned by heart, and, with many variants, wove themselves into the community's tradition. Ballads like "The Avondale Mine Disaster" that focus on a single dramatic episode unfolding directly and logically

come closer to the style of the classic British popular ballads than those which narrate events in general terms.

Coal mining is still a hazardous occupation, but not as much as it was a generation or two ago before safety devices were adopted by the industry and before first aid and the safety-first movement had made such headway among management and the mineworkers. The same period was marked by violence and bitterness as the miners fought for union recognition, higher wages, the eight-hour day, and other objectives. Emotions generated in this maelstrom found their way into ballads.

So did a lot of other things. Ballads make specific references to different kinds of jobs, tools, and equipment at a certain plant; to bosses, popular and otherwise; to the company store, now outlawed; and to poor food and housing. They mirror social and craft customs and political beliefs. Friction between immigrants and natives and between employees and individual bosses come through, as do the tensions growing out of the introduction of labor-saving machines.

But not all ballads were grim and foreboding. A surprising amount of humor went into them despite hardships, or perhaps because of them, for they undoubtedly served as a release from frustration. Through ballads the miners poked fun at the local boss and satirized company policy; laughed at their own discomforts; made light of social habits especially with reference to drinking; and ridiculed the after-work braggart holding forth in the mine-patch saloon:

I'm a celebrated workingman, my duties I don't shirk;
I can cut more coal than any man from Pittsburgh to New York,
It's a holy, roaring terror, boys, how I get through my work,
That's while I'm at my glory in the barroom.⁸

The anthracite ballads, like the traditional ballads of other industries, are based on fact. In the absence of an adequate labor press, the ballad proved an effective journalistic device for reaching one's fellow workers with a message or a piece of dramatic information.

Ballads were honest reports to the people, told as simply and sincerely as the bards could make them, with little or no straining after artistic effects. Truth was the dominant element, and because this was so the workers believed them, sang them over and over again, and remembered them, in some cases forty to fifty years after they had been committed to memory.

Thus, whatever may be their intrinsic value as oral literature or

folk music, there is no doubt whatever as to their significance as documents that keep alive the memory of generations of industrial workers who gave so much of themselves in the building of our country. Here is a reliable record of a significant phase of the Industrial Revolution from the workers' viewpoint, often couched in their own distinctive lingo. Revealing habits of thought, the ballads give a real insight into the workers' minds.

The bardic influence was strong among anthracite miners. Ballads were made by a group of workers with a special talent for telling a story in that form. Steeped in the tradition of British and Irish folk music, they had no need to grope for stanzaic models, idiomatic phrases, or even suitable tunes. The ability to read and write was an advantage, though an unnecessary one, because many ballads were introduced orally and passed into circulation the same way. Important to the creation of ballads was an intuitive feeling for poetizing, an ability to improvise, and, of course, an impelling urge to tell a story.

Anthracite miner bards were not elected or appointed, except at *eisteddfods*, which were Welsh competitive tournaments in vocal and instrumental music and kindred arts. Yet they often spoke with authority because in their consciousness they bore all the influences of their environment. They were rooted in the same community as their listeners.

To express the variegated life of a group of workers with any degree of adequacy required some ingenuity. It took skill to make a ballad stirring enough to inspire a heroic resistance, rhythmic enough to give a lift to pickets' marching feet, and warm enough to cheer and console strikers in their hour of trial. For all their efforts, bards lacked a sense of authorship, and were quite modest about it when traced. They did not always have their ballads printed as broadsides, but when they did it was for a good cause.

The most gifted were bards who composed ballads and sang them, too—true practitioners of the ancient and honorable order of folk minstrelsy. Not only the anthracite industry, but other industries, too, had them at one time or another. The workers lavished food, liquor, and affection on them in gratitude for the joy they brought into their bleak and circumscribed lives. "Shanty-men" aboard sailing vessels, "song leaders" in the labor camps of the South, "singers" in the logging camps across the country, and "minstrels" in the an-

thracite mine patches—regardless of the local tag, they were all kindred spirits under their red woolens, and were cast from the same mold.

A lively, perceptive sense of humor was common to all of them. They made a ballad come alive with individualistic touches, such as a knowing gesture, the lift of an eyebrow, or by intonation. A naturally good though uncultivated voice was an asset. So was the ability to play a fiddle, guitar, or banjo, and dance a jig, reel, or hornpipe.

Carefree and individualistic, they could not long submit to company discipline or to deadly routine. So they hit the road, trudging on foot, hopping freights, riding riverboats, meeting up with railroad boomers, "ten-day" hardrock miners, tramp printers, foot-loose lumberjacks, and other roving craftsmen. When a railroad boomer "pulled the pin" (quit his job) he would tell his friends that he was going to the Indian Valley Line, that mythical short railroad where a good job under ideal working conditions could always be found. Western coal miners meant the same thing when they said they were "hunting the honey pond and flitter tree."

One reason for optimism was that they made the rounds of more or less the same working places, saloons, and friends year after year. Hardrock miners, for example, tramped over the great mining circle of the Far West (Montana to Nevada, California, Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, Idaho, and back to Montana).⁹ A railroad boomer would shove his brotherhood membership card under the nose of a worthy brother when he wanted to eat, sleep, or ride free, and usually he was accommodated. And the fraternal spirit was equally strong among other craftsmen. Union lodge halls were so many way stations, and a union card was a pass to local hospitality.

Among the more colorful industrial bard-minstrels was Harry K. McClintock,¹⁰ known to many old-time railroaders as "Haywire Mac," composer of "The Big Rock Candy Mountains." Best known lumberjack bard in Maine and the Maritime Provinces was Larry Gorman¹¹ whose songs and ballads caught the flavor of shantyboy life in the Eastern lumber camps. In the West there was Billy Allen¹² of Wausau, Wisconsin, known by his pseudonym, "Shan T. Boy," by many lumberjacks in Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin.

Outstanding minstrel of the petroleum industry was Gib Morgan,¹³ beloved old vagabond whose stories about oil and oil workers are told and retold around the world. The song makers of Butte, Mon-

tana, who were renowned among hardrock miners were Matty Kiely,¹⁴ "Happy" Downey,¹⁵ and Jimmy Gleason.¹⁶ Bard of Soho, steelworkers' neighborhood in Pittsburgh during the '80's and '90's was Philip Byerly,¹⁷ known as "The Irish Minstrel Boy."

"Come on, Davie, let's hear you," was a familiar cry in the bituminous coal fields of Ohio and Indiana at the turn of the century when Davie Robb¹⁹ appeared; he made and sang many miners' ballads. Uncle George Jones,²⁰ blind Negro balladist of the Alabama soft coal miners, would emerge from his windowless cabin in Trafford, Alabama, once a year to sing a ballad of his own composition before the district convention of the United Mine Workers of America.

And gone but not forgotten are those beloved anthracite bards and minstrels—Con Carbon of Wilkes-Barre; Ed Foley of Mt. Carmel; Giant O'Neill of Shenandoah; and Joe Gallagher of Lansford, among others. Several, whose songs had eluded me, receive belated recognition in this chapter.

They not only created ballads of their hazardous occupation, but sang them from one end of the anthracite region to the other, often making the rounds on foot. From mine patch to mine patch they strolled, singing, dancing, fiddling, and storytelling in barrooms, on village greens, or on the porches of general stores such as Mackin Brothers' store in the East End section of Wilkes-Barre that inspired Con Carbon to write his ballad, "Mackin's Porch."

Folk minstrelsy was a labor of love with them, and their reward for an evening's entertainment often was no more than a meal, a few drinks, and a few coal-begrimed silver and copper coins tossed into their weather-beaten caps.

Ironically, though well known among mineworkers, their visits to a community were seldom mentioned in the local newspapers unless they were involved in an accident or unless they died like the poor fellow described in the following news item published in the *Mauch Chunk Democrat* of August 9, 1890:

A FIDDLER FALLS BY THE WAYSIDE

Cressona, Pa., August 6—Philip Janes [sic], aged 60 years, was found dead in the public road near this place. He was known throughout Schuylkill County as "the fiddler." He was an excellent performer on the violin, and usually carried that instrument with him in his travels.

What an obituary for an entertainer "known throughout Schuylkill County"!

Even mining ballads, with some exceptions, were overlooked by the region's newspapers. The same thing happened to the immortal songs of Stephen C. Foster in the composer's lifetime, as J. B. Russell points out in his feature story on Foster in the *Cincinnati Gazette* of January 22, 1857: "In fact, we have seldom or never observed a passing 'notice' of any of his songs in the papers, although the songs themselves are 'familiar as household words' all over the civilized globe."²¹

In its heyday the anthracite folk song tradition functioned beneath the surface of the American social pattern. Itinerant folk entertainers moved in a sort of underworld of their own, shut off from that part of the population whose interests lay outside the anthracite industry. They had their own reliable public: the miners who lived in mine patches isolated by lack of public transportation.

Now that American folklore has come into its own, anthracite ballads have found their niche in the national heritage. There is an awakening of interest in this product of bygone days. Today's newspapers of the anthracite region and of the adjoining Pennsylvania Dutch region are sympathetic judging from the amount of folklore published as human interest features. I have been fortunate in the support I have received from newspapers throughout eastern Pennsylvania; and I feel that folklore collectors should appreciate the value of newspaper publicity in their field research.

PENNSYLVANIA DUTCH MINERS' CONTRIBUTION

Now to the question asked earlier in this chapter: What did the Pennsylvania Dutch miners contribute to the folk song tradition? Under my 1957 Guggenheim grant, I had sought to record a comprehensive collection of folklore reflecting Pennsylvania Dutch folkways in a coal mining environment. The results have been gratifying in all types of folklore except one—folk songs. I had hoped to unearth enough evidence to show a parallel Pennsylvania Dutch folk song tradition based on the anthracite industry. While I recorded some songs in the Dutch dialect (they form part of this chapter), not one makes any reference to coal mining.

Maybe I had set my sights too high, but my hope had been inspired by the memory of an earlier experience that proved fruitful. In 1935, when organizing the Pennsylvania Folk Festival at Allentown, I had run into difficulty locating traditional Pennsylvania Dutch folk-songs and folk singers. Nearly everybody I approached in Lehigh County believed that that era was dead. But with a folk festival to put on I could not give up my search. Only a few days before curtain time two men, who were to remain lifelong friends and co-workers in Pennsylvania folklore, came to my rescue. They were the Reverend Thomas R. Brendle, pastor of historic Egypt Reformed Church in Lehigh County, and the late William S. Troxell, the beloved "Pumpernickle Bill," then Pennsylvania Dutch dialect columnist on the Allentown *Morning Call*.

Soon after the folk festival, the men acquired a portable recording machine, and with occasional assistance from Paul Wieand, they scoured the countryside for surviving folk songs of their people. In two or three years they recorded several hundred folk songs that had been thought lost forever. Twenty-seven songs from the collection were published in their chapter in *Pennsylvania Songs and Legends* (Philadelphia, 1949), which for the first time provided a basis for comparison between German folk songs and those of the British tradition.

The Brendle-Troxell Collection, containing approximately four hundred German and Pennsylvania Dutch dialect folk songs, including titles contributed by Mrs. William S. Troxell, is now safely deposited in the vault of the Fackenthal Library at Franklin and Marshall College in Lancaster. In addition to the songs, there are approximately thirty-five books that the collectors consulted in their comparative studies. Eventually the entire collection will be made available to scholars.

The only Pennsylvania Dutch folk song book is *Songs along the Mahantongo* (Lancaster, Pa., 1951) by Walter E. Boyer, Albert F. Buffington, and Don Yoder. The volume contains sixty-one songs with their tunes, English translations rhymed to make them singable, and scholarly and entertaining commentary.

There are texts of folk songs in John Baer Stoudt's pioneer work, *The Folklore of the Pennsylvania Germans* (Philadelphia, 1916).

These, together with other collections, represent an abundant harvest of Pennsylvania Dutch folk songs and ballads; but the total number recovered does not do full justice to a people with more than 250 years of history on Pennsylvania soil.

Dr. Preston A. Barba, editor of "S Pennsylvawnish Eck," in the *Allentown Morning Call*, throws light on the subject in the following explanation that appeared in his column on July 22, 1944:

Students of German folk literature know that a wealth of songs and ballads has come down to us through the generations. The elaboration of human emotions and experiences in the form of lyrics and narratives in verse is a process that can be traced back to early pre-Christian times among Germanic peoples. Why then do relatively few such folksongs and ballads exist among the Pennsylvania Germans of today?

An answer to this question must be sought in two factors: In the first place, mass migrations from Switzerland and the lands of the Upper Rhine began at an austere time in the political, religious and economic history of those lands. And when our forefathers came to Pennsylvania they were confronted with the stern necessities of clearing the forests for tilling the soil and of establishing for themselves new homes. There was little time and occasion for song and dance then. Also large groups of them adhered to religious tenets which demanded great sobriety and self-restraint and they looked askance upon the joys of life.

Secondly, the students of our folksongs and ballads must be mindful of the fact that our Pennsylvania German forefathers left their native lands a century and more before the great romantic revival of interest in the Germanic lore and literature of an earlier period. Clemens Brentano and Achim von Arnim only published their notable collection of songs and ballads, *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, in the years 1806-8; and Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, famous philologists, antiquarians and collectors of folk tales and ballads, were active in the first half of the 19th century.

But the innate love of song and story did not perish in the hearts of our Pennsylvania Germans and when some current event deeply stirred them, it sometimes found expression in verses which then journeyed over the countryside in the form of cheap broadsides. . . .

Apropos of Dr. Barba's explanation, the editors of *Songs along the Mahantongo* make the following observation in their introduction: "Although folk-dancing was popular in our valley, it must be admitted that on the basis of our researches thus far, no traces of German or Swiss folk-dances can be found. Even the tunes of the old-time fiddlers are without a single exception suspiciously Irish or English!"

Along the same line of thought but with reference to collecting in western Pennsylvania, Samuel Preston Bayard comments as follows in the introduction of his book, *Hill Country Tunes* (Philadelphia, 1944): "The material which concerns us here is that of our dominant

—and oldest—imported tradition: the British-German. In this compound the latter element has much less importance than the former, since the Germans seem generally to have adopted and continued the cultivation of the British tradition which they found already flourishing, or still taking root and growing, when they arrived. . . . British music predominates everywhere in Pennsylvania—even in German-speaking districts, from which the writer has heard radio programs of fiddlers with Teutonic names playing Irish and Scottish reels!"

The same thing happened in the West End coal field. On the basis of three months of field researches with a portable recording machine in what is, after all, a small area (West End of Schuylkill County, Williams Valley, and Lykens Valley), it can be said that the Pennsylvania Dutch coal miners as an ethnic group did not create a distinctive folk song tradition of their own—at least not in the Dutch dialect.

However, as Pennsylvania Dutchmen had done in other parts of the commonwealth, they participated as individuals in the English-language folk song tradition of the anthracite region on the same terms as miners of Irish or British origin. Being bilingual made it easy to do so.

By way of illustration, I shall discuss briefly two of my Pennsylvania Dutch informants. There is, for example, John Foster Stutzman of Donaldson. In every sense of the term he is a typical Pennsylvania Dutchman. Born in 1892, he started his coal mining career at the age of fourteen when he got a job picking slate for ten hours a day in the breaker of Lincoln Colliery at a weekly wage of \$2.50. From the breaker he went below into the mines where, successively, he worked as a door tender, mule driver, laborer, and contract miner—at the Lincoln, Good Spring, and other Reading-owned collieries in the West End. When the industry shut down early in the '30's, his mining career ended, and, scraping together a few dollars, he opened a candy store in the village from which he has eked out a living ever since. Heavy, with brawny shoulders and powerful hands, he looked as if he could lick his weight in wildcats, but he was a gentle man as indicated by his way with children who make up most of his customers. You would think that one who had driven mine mules for ten years, as he had done, would not be afraid of a little mechanical gadget like a microphone, but he did show symptoms of mike fright. In his confusion he sang fragments of several anthracite mining ballads that I had never heard before, but the verses were scrambled and distorted.

Anyway, one of the fragments was of a 1902 strikers' morale song composed, according to Stutzman, by Joseph Betz, a miner at the Middle Creek Colliery. The song was printed on broadsides which were peddled in the mine patches at ten cents each.

Stutzman remembered only two stanzas of Betz's song:

My scab, you are a daisy,
Remember what I say:
When the men begin to work
They will receive their pay.

The day of victory is coming,
It's coming bye and bye;
The soldiers in the army
They fight until they die.

For a third verse Stutzman sang an imperfect version of "My Sweet-heart's the Mule in the Mines."²² He said he could not remember the rest of Betz's song nor could he fill out the fragments that undoubtedly were parts of two other unfamiliar anthracite mining songs.

After much coaxing by me and a neighbor, Harry Freeman, Stutzman agreed to sing again on October 30, 1958, provided I would permit him to have his song typewritten in advance. As this was the only way he could avoid mike fright, I agreed. Stutzman said he had made up the song himself and used to sing it while on the bumper, driving mine mules. Here is what he sang:

OH! WHERE DID YOU GET THAT MULE?

When I was just a little boy
I lived in Saratogy;
I was my mother's pride and joy,
I was always up to roguery.
They tried to educate me,
But I wouldn't go to school,
That's why I'm in the coal mine now
Driving this damn mule.

CHORUS:

Where did you get that mule?
Oh! where did you get that snail?
He'll jump through his collar
If you don't tie a knot in his tail.
They call me Billy McGinnigan
But my right name's Johnny O'Toole.
When I go out the people shout:
Oh! where did you get that mule?

Charles Henry "Mule" Haas, being under fifty, obviously is too young to have been a participant in the anthracite miners' folk song tradition. He was still a youth when the West End collieries were going out of business from 1927 through 1930. What mining experience he has was acquired since 1937 in so-called bootleg coal holes operated by displaced miners.

Gifted as a ballad singer and storyteller, he might have won a measure of regional fame as a strolling miner minstrel if there were still that audience of miners that was developed in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. But that romantic era is gone. Without loyal followers, he is a pathetic figure even though he does not know it; his talents are wasted and his efforts go unrewarded. I found him living in a shanty off a back road near a makeshift coal breaker in Llewellyn. On his infrequent public appearances he sings in the cowboy style, which is wholly alien to the anthracite region. For laughs he brays like a mule, which accounts for his peculiar nickname.

At our recording session on Sunday afternoon, September 22, 1957, he proved that he still was a good entertainer despite his age. A small, informal group of miners and ex-miners and their womenfolk sat around the room listening to Mule Haas sing and tell stories, all on the coal mining theme. It was plain that they were having a good time. The Mule sang variants of three anthracite ballads found in my published collections—"The Miner's Home Sweet Home," "My Sweetheart's the Mule in the Mine," and "The Dream of the Miner's Child."

In addition, he improvised three mining songs. One of them was entitled "I'm a Bootleg Miner," and the opening lines are:

They call me the bootleggin' miner,
I'm working just like the rest;
I'm a bootleggin' miner—none can beat me,
'Cause I know I'm the best.

His creative ability influenced his singing, even of the variants. For example, the English parlor ballad, "Don't Go Down in the Mine, Daddy," which as, "The Dream of the Miner's Child," was recorded under many labels by Vernon Dalhart, had an original introduction when Mule Haas sang it for me—

Now this is the story; we all know it's true,
Of a little girl and how this dream came true.
She glanced at her daddy—
Now listen while I sing to you.

Haas's version consists of a paraphrasing of the ballad from beginning to end, almost as if it were his own creation.

His songs, and most of the others that I recorded on my 1957 field trip, were transcribed for me by Jacob A. Evanson, supervisor of vocal music in the Pittsburgh (Pa.) Public School System, and one of the country's outstanding folk song experts. Haas's songs gave Evanson more trouble than all the others combined because of the freedom of his singing. With irregularities in almost every stanza, the songs were annotated in full, taking up considerable space, which precluded their reproduction here.

While annotating, Evanson penciled marginal notes to me, in which he gave his fresh impressions of Haas's singing. "The man has real gifts," wrote Evanson on one sheet. "Though the tradition he works in is not our strongest, yet it's very real. . . . I think Haas's stuff is very real because it is creative. I had to write out his whole songs. They are so different for each verse. I think he very clearly has a real impulse to 'make music'—his own songs, to be sure, but others' songs too, for he remakes them in every verse. . . . It's good evidence of the need of the people to try to give musical shape to ideas of importance in their lives. Without such creativity people can't even think, really. I wish we as teachers, whether primary, secondary or tertiary, could have an adequate humility before the actual efforts of musically untrained people, and make the development of the needed creativity central, instead of killing it off by the imposition of an alien musical culture. . . ."

I wish it could be said that Mule Haas in his creativity is a representative of his Pennsylvania Dutch forebears. In one sense this may be true, but one looks in vain in his original songs, in his variants, and in his stories for some trace of Pennsylvania Dutch ancestral tradition or culture.

Forty-odd songs, most of them recorded on magnetic tape, were collected on my Guggenheim research project for study and possible publication in this chapter. By careful selection (and some tough decisions!) I have cut the number down to fifteen. Of these, several are traditional anthracite miners' ballads, fifty years or more in oral circulation, that had eluded me. One of them, "Phoenix Park Colliery" is a "come-all-ye" type of song, never before published, to my knowledge.

Sources and other details are given in the headnotes to the various ballads, but I want to make special mention here of the occasion when I collected four Pennsylvania Dutch songs, three in the dialect. On

Saturday evening, October 5, 1957, the very last night of my three-months' research visit to Schuylkill County, I was a guest of Ralph M. Hyle, president of the Lycoming Telephone Company, at an "All-Dutch Night" party at his home, "Fair Winds," on Bird Hill Road, Pine Grove. Guests wore costumes of farmers and farm women of another generation. The menu was printed in the Dutch dialect and traditional Dutch cooking was prepared by experienced Dutch cooks. As part of the entertainment, and as a gesture of assistance to me, Hyle had invited elderly William Sholley, Pennsylvania Dutch folk singer from Lebanon, and had asked me to bring my recording machine. "Pop" Sholley sang many songs in English and Dutch, and from their number I have selected the following for this chapter: "Katzejammer," "Mar Schlachd' en Aldar Hahne," and "Hockarum," all three in the dialect; and "Sauerkraut" in English.

Two of the songs, "Mar Schlachd' en Aldar Hahne," and "Sauerkraut," are variants of songs in the Brendle-Troxell Collection. The cumulative song, "Katzejammer," is a variant of the German song, "Unser Deutsche Brieder," found in *Songs along the Mahantongo*. The fourth song in this group, "Hockarum," is not in the latter book nor in the Brendle-Troxell Collection.

These four songs were transcribed from my magnetic tapes by Mr. and Mrs. Edwin B. Spaulding of East Brunswick, New Jersey, trained musicians with a special knowledge of Pennsylvania Dutch folk songs acquired from working on the Brendle-Troxell Collection. While this expert pair worked on the tunes, Mrs. Spaulding's father, the Reverend Thomas R. Brendle, transcribed and translated the difficult Dutch dialect texts.

In his letter of transmittal to me, dated August 2, 1959, Spaulding wrote as follows:

You will notice that "Hockarum" and "Sauerkraut" have been transcribed in their entirety. In each case the basic melody was simple, but in practically every verse a variation was introduced of such a nature that it could not be ignored, but at the same time it could not be superimposed upon the basic melody without eventually making the basic tune a mess. I hope, therefore, that you can use the transcriptions as I have given them, which is exactly as the singer gave them.

We are, of course, indebted to the Reverend Brendle for the Pennsylvania German words and the free translations, and he spent considerable time listening to the tape to identify the correct words. There should, therefore, be no doubt of the authenticity of the words and translation!

HOCKARUM

(Sitting Around)

(Sung by William "Pop" Sholley at Pine Grove, Schuylkill County, October 5, 1957. Recorded by George Korson.)



(1) Well Sie hock - e in de Behr Shtubbum Un schpautz - e



Du - wach - brie; Wann dum - mi Shtor - iss hehr - e widd Dann



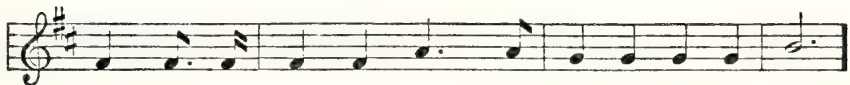
hock dich nee - we hie. (2) Bei Ree - je wed - der un bei



Schee, Zu all - i zeit im Johr, Do mied - e sie un



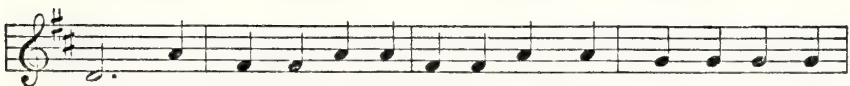
hock - a rum Im wadd - s - haus un im Shtohr. (3) Dar Glee is



darr, un di Frucht is grohs, (un) Di Jung - e war - re ald;



Sie hock - e um dar Off - e rum Wann's wawrem is od - dar



kald. (4) Sie blesch - dre dick di Off - a Bladd Mit braun - e Du - wach - s -



brie, (Sie) Hock - e schier wie Ees - el fiel Wie dum - e bee-nich



Fieh. (5) Deel hock - e schtill wie en hilz - ner Bock (Un) Schwet - ze



gawr ken Wadd Un ann - re scheht des Maul net schtill Un sie



bab-ble imm - ar fadd. (6) Fer - zeh - le Sctor-iss fun d'r Geil Un



fun d'r Leef - ar Sei Schmoh-ke wei - se Pei - fe foll Mit



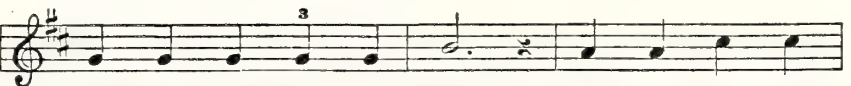
laud - ar "Cut un Dry". (7) Fer - zeh - le Sctor-iss fun de Meed (Un)



Fun de Wei-war aw Wiss - e fiel un saw - je fiel Fum



Par-re sein-re Fraw (8) Sie hock - a rum di ganz - e Nacht Uff



Bax - e Fes - sar un Schtiel All - i Ow - ed



sin sie dadd Ebbs wawrem is od - dar kiehl.

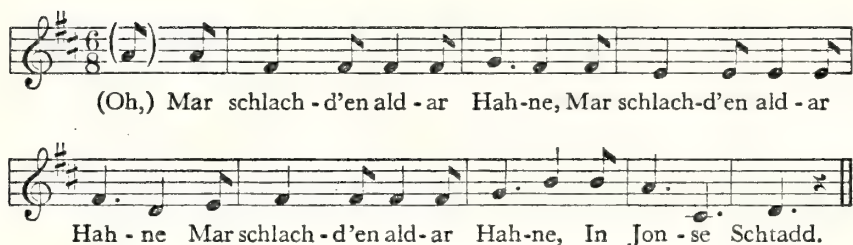
1. *Well, Sie hocke in de Behr Schtubb rum,
Un schpautze Duwachsrie;
Wann dummi Schtoriss hehre widd
Dann hock dich neewe hie.*
2. *Bei Reeje wedder un bei Schee,
Zu alli zeit im Johr,
Do miede sie un hocka rum
Im waddshaus un im Schtohr.*
3. *Dar Glee is darr, un di Frucht is grohs,
Un Di Junge warre ald;
Sie hocke um dar Offe rum
Wann's wawrem is oddar kald.*
4. *Sie bleschdre dick di Offa Bladd
Mit braune Duwachsrie;
Sie Hocke schier wie Eesel fiel
Wie dume beenich Fieh.*
5. *Deel hocke schtill wie en hiltzner Bock,
(Un) Schwetze gawr ken Wadd
Un annre schteht des Maul net schtill
Un sie babble immar fadd.*
6. *Ferzehle Schtoriss fun d'r Geil
Un fun d'r Leefar Sei
Schmohke weise Peife foll
Mit laudar "Cut un Dry."*
7. *Ferzehle Schtoriss fun de Meed
(Un) fun de Weiwar aw;
Wisse fiel un sawje fiel
Fum Parre seinre Fraw.*
8. *Sie hocka rum di ganze Nacht
Uff Baxe, Fessar un Schtiel;
Alli Owed sin sie dadd
Ebbs wawrem is oddar kiehl.*

1. Well, they sit around in the barroom
And spit tobacco juice.
Would you hear senseless stories?
Then go and sit with them.
2. In rain and snow,
In all times of the year.
They meet and sit together
In tavern and in store.
3. The clover is dry and the grain is high,
And the young grow old;
But still they sit around the store,
Whether it's warm or cold.
4. They bespatter the stove plate
With brown tobacco juice;
Sit almost like mules
Like dumb two-legged beasts.
5. Some sit quietly like wooden blocks
And speak not a word.
For others the mouth is never still
And they babble on and on.
6. Tell stories of the horses
And of the shoats.
Smoke white pipes filled
With one "Cut and Dry."
7. Tell stories of the girls
And of the women, too;
Know much to tell
About the pastor's wife.
8. They sit around all night,
On boxes, barrels, or chairs;
Every evening they are there
Whether warm or cold.

MAR SCHLACHD' EN ALDAR HAHNE

(We Butcher an Old Rooster)

(Sung by William "Pop" Sholley at Pine Grove, Schuylkill County, October 5, 1957. Recorded by George Korson.)



1. (Oh,) *Mar schlachd'en aldar Hahne,*
Mar schlachd'en aldar Hahne,
Mar schlachd'en aldar Hahne,
In Jonse Shtadd.
2. *Mar rubb en mit dar Beisjang,*
Mar rubb en mit dar Beisjang,
Mar rubb en mit dar Beisjang,
In Jonse Shtadd.
3. *Mar brie en in en Briehdrook,*
Mar brie en in en Briehdrook,
Mar brie en in en Briehdrook,
In Jonse Shtadd.
4. *Mar hack en mit dar Holzax*
Mar hack en mit dar Holzax
Mar hack en mit dar Holzax
In Jonse Shtadd.
5. *Mar fress en in en Seischtall,*
Mar fress en in en Seischtall,
Mar fress en in en Seischtall,
In Jonse Shtadd.

6. *Sell is as ledscht fum Hahne,
 Sell is as ledscht fum Hahne,
 Sell is as ledscht fum Hahne,
 In Jonse Schtadd.*

1. We butcher an old rooster,
 We butcher an old rooster,
 We butcher an old rooster,
 In Jonestown
2. We pluck him with the pincers,
 We pluck him with the pincers,
 We pluck him with the pincers,
 In Jonestown.
3. We scald him in a scalding trough,
 We scald him in a scalding trough,
 We scald him in a scalding trough,
 In Jonestown.
4. We chop him up with a wood-ax,
 We chop him up with a wood-ax,
 We chop him up with a wood-ax,
 In Jonestown.
5. We eat him in the pigsty,
 We eat him in the pigsty,
 We eat him in the pigsty,
 In Jonestown.
6. That is the end of the rooster,
 That is the end of the rooster
 That is the end of the rooster,
 In Jonestown.

KATZEJAMMER

(Jitters Day)

(Sung by William "Pop" Sholley at Pine Grove, Schuylkill County, October 5, 1957. Recorded by George Korson.)

Fairly slow

Heid is Muun-dawg, Heid is Katz - e - jam - mer.

Faster

Katz - e - jam - mer Muun-dawg Uff - ge-werm - des Ess - en.
(Sing accumulated phrases each time)

Bru-der, al - so was willst du? Woll - e mar moll nim - mi mit

zam-mer ess - en. Well, Un - ser Deitsch - e Bried - er, Sie

lew - e so wie ich und du. Un - ser Deitsch - e Bried -

(Last time only)

er, Sie lew - e so wie mir. Wir leb - en so wohl.

1. *Heid is Muundawg,
Heid is Katzejammer;
Katzejammer Muundawg,
Uffgewermdes Essen.
Bruder, also was willst du?
Wolle mar moll nimmi mit zammer essen.*

*Well, Unser Deitsche Brieder,
Sie lewe so wie ich und du.
Unser Deitsche Brieder,
Sie lewe so wie mir.
Wir leben so wohl.*

2. *Heid is Dinschdawg,
Heid is Pannekuche.
Pannekuche Dinschdawg, etc.*
3. *Heid is Middwoch,
Heid is griene Buhne;
Griene Buhne Middwoch, etc.*
4. *Heid is Dunnerschdawg,
Heid is Sawwargraud;
Sawwargraud Dunnerschdawg, etc.*
5. *Heid is Freidawg,
Heid is Fischdawg;
Fischdawg Freidawg, etc.*
6. *Heid is Sammschdawg,
Heid is Saufdawg;
Saufdawg Sammschdawg, etc.*
7. *Heid is Sunndawg,
Heid is Fressdawg,
Fressdawg Sunndawg,
Saufdawg Sammschdawg,
Fischdawg Freidawg,*

*Sawwargraud Dunnerschdawg,
Griene Buhne Middwoch,
Pannekuche Dinschdawg,
Katzejammer Muundawg,
Uffgewermdes Essen, etc.*

1. Today is Monday,
Today is "jitters" day;
"Jitters" day Monday,
A warmed-up stuff.
Brother, what would you desire?
We should not eat together anymore.
Well, our German brothers,
They live like you and me;
Our German brothers
Live like us.
We live so well!
2. Today is Tuesday,
pancakes, etc.
3. Today is Wednesday,
green beans, etc.
4. Today is Thursday,
sauerkraut, etc.
5. Today is Friday,
fishday, etc.
6. Today is Saturday,
drinking day, etc.
7. Today is Sunday,
eating day, etc.

SAUERKRAUT

(Sung by William "Pop" Sholley at Pine Grove, Schuylkill County, October 5, 1957. Recorded by George Korson.)



(1) Now if you'll on - ly list - en, as to what I



speak a - bout, I'm go - ing for to tell you how they



make that sau - er - kraut. The sau - er - kraut is made up of what

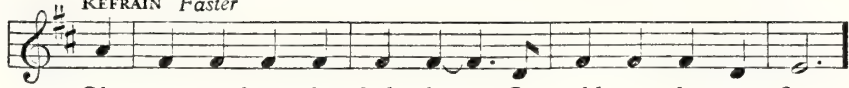


ever - y - one sup - po - ses; But if it's made out of



what you call those lit - tle cab - bage ros - es.

REFRAIN *Faster*



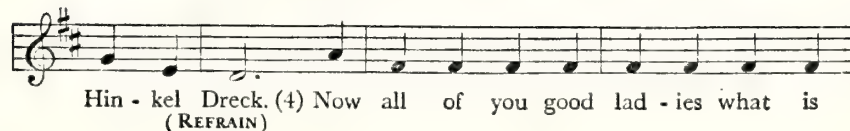
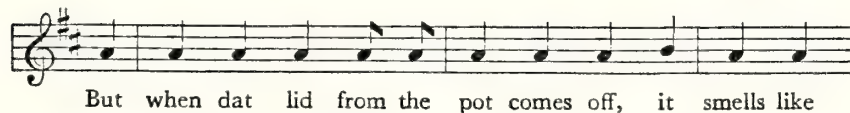
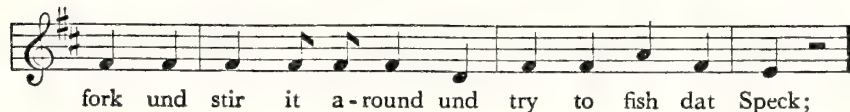
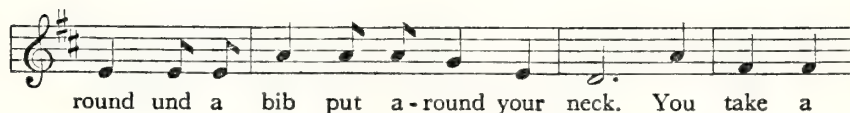
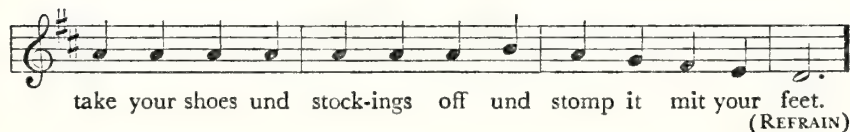
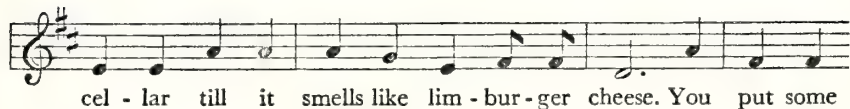
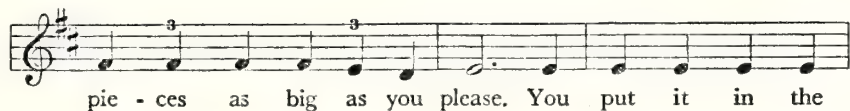
Oh sau - er - kraut is bul - ly, I told you it was fine.

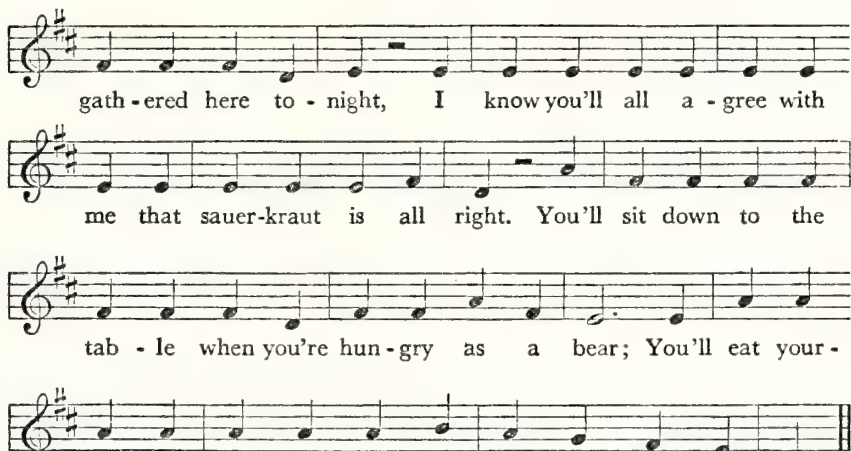


So help me, with cheese und crack - ers why I eat it



all the time. (2) You take a knife und cut it up in





gath - ered here to - night, I know you'll all a - gree with
me that sauer-kraut is all right. You'll sit down to the
tab - le when you're hun - gry as a bear; You'll eat your -
self so dog - gone full your two - way stretch will tear.
(REFRAIN)

1. Now if you'll only listen, as to what I speak about,
I'm going for to tell you how they make that sauerkraut.
The sauerkraut is made up of what everyone supposes;
But if it's made out of what you call those little cabbage roses.

REFRAIN

- Oh, sauerkraut is bully, I told you it was fine,
So help me, with cheese and crackers, why, I eat it all the time.
2. You take a knife und cut it up in pieces as big as you please,
You put it in the cellar till it smells like limburger cheese,
You put some salt und pepper on, to make him nice und sweet.
You take your shoes und stockings off und stomp it mit your feet.
 3. Now when that sauerkraut is done, the table then you set.
The knives und forks und the plates put around und a bib put
around your neck,
You take a fork und stir it around und try to fish dat *Speck*;
But when dat lid from the pot comes off, it smells like *Hinkel
Dreck*.
 4. Now all of you good ladies what is gathered here tonight,
I know you'll all agree with me that sauerkraut is all right.
You'll sit down to the table when you're hungry as a bear;
You'll eat yourself so doggone full your two-way stretch will tear.

LAUDERBACH

(Sung by Mrs. Anna Daubert Green at Pine Grove, Schuylkill County, September 9, 1957. Recorded by George Korson.)



In Laud - er - bach haw wich mei Schtrumpf ver - lore, Und
so gehn ich net haeme; So gehn ich wie - der noch
Laud - er - bach, Und hoole mir ein Schtrumpf fa mein bei - ei - ne.

*In Lauderbach haw wich mei Schtrumpf verlore,
Und so gehn ich net haeme;
So gehn ich wieder noch Lauderbach
Und hoole mir ein Schtrumpf fa mein bei-ei-ne.*

In Lauderbach I lost my stocking
And so I won't go home;
So I'm going again to Lauderbach
And bring back a stocking for my leg.

MINE HANDS ON MINE SELF

On Saturday morning, August 3, 1957, I visited Ranch Chickagami, Pottsville Y.W.C.A. camp for girls on the shores of Sweet Arrow Lake, near Pine Grove, for the purpose of recording some camp songs.

Ranging in ages from eight to fourteen years, the girls represented a cross section of Schuylkill County's population; about half of their number were of Pennsylvania Dutch ancestry. Among them were former residents of the county whose parents had moved to New

York, New Jersey, Delaware, and Maryland, but held fast to Schuylkill County loyalties. Some of the girls were daughters of anthracite miners, or former miners. The camp director, Mrs. Dora Birmingham of Frackville, was also a miner's daughter, her father, the late Harry Felker of Pottsville, having worked at the St. Clair Colliery for forty-two years.

Among this representative group of girls I had hoped to find some indigenous folk songs reflecting the way of life in the coal fields. The camp's mimeographed and stapled song sheets contained the texts of more than seventy-five songs, many of which had been made up by young campers over a period of thirty years. There were many parodies of popular songs and of folk songs, American and international, nonsense ditties, and tongue twisters, but of traditional anthracite ballads—none. I selected seven titles from the song sheets which the girl campers sang for me under Mrs. Birmingham's direction, and which I recorded for future study.

Out of the group I finally chose one, "Mine Hands On Mine Self," for inclusion in this book, as its cumulative pattern is characteristic of the Pennsylvania Dutch folk song tradition. Whoever wrote this ballad must have heard the German song, *Vetter Michel* ("Cousin Michael"). It is beyond mere coincidence that both songs should have the same central idea: a girl singer identifying different parts of her anatomy with amusing words. The version I recorded lacks the following four lines:

Yesterday Michael dropped around,
Frederick Michael dropped around,
Yesterday Michael dropped around,
He dropped around!

They are followed by two additional lines in which Michael points to different parts of the girl's anatomy and asks her, "What is this?"

These important lines are omitted from the Ranch Chickagami version I recorded, perhaps because the anonymous song writer was more interested in creating a funny camp song than in following a folk song tradition. With gestures this version is very amusing.

The standard version of this German song was recorded at Hegins, Schuylkill County, in 1948, by Walter E. Boyer, Albert F. Buffington, and Don Yoder, and is published in both Pennsylvania Dutch and in an English translation in their book, *Songs along the Mahantongo*,

from which the above lines are quoted. The three editors cite the different printed sources, American and German, where they found German variants.

(Sung by Floie Rabada, 12½ years old, at Ranch Chickagami,
Sweet Arrow Lake, Schuylkill County, August 3, 1957.
Recorded by George Korson.)

Mine hands on mine self, Vas iss dass hier,
Dass iss mine floor mop - per, mine mam - ma dear.
Floor mop - per, floor mop - per ink - y dink - y do,
Dass vas I learn at mine camp, yah! yah!

1. Mine hands on mine self, vas iss dass hier,
Dass iss mine floor mopper, mine mamma dear.

REFRAIN:

Floor mopper, floor mopper inky dinky do,
Dass vas I learn at mine camp, yah! yah!

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------|
| 2. Sweat boxer (forehead) | 8. Rubber necker |
| 3. Eye blinker | 9. Wind chester |
| 4. Nose blower | 10. Bread basket |
| 5. Ear flapper | 11. Sit downer |
| 6. Meat chopper | 12. Knee bender |
| 7. Soup strainer | 13. Wife kicker |

TOWER CITY AND BROOKSIDE COLLIERY

Tower City, principal town in the Williams Valley, was named for its founder, Charlemagne Tower, Sr., in 1868. One of America's great industrialists and corporation lawyers of the post-Civil War era, he is remembered for his development of the iron ore resource of Minnesota, known as the Vermilion range, in 1884, when he was seventy-three years old.

Tower was a man of imagination, courage, and determination. A native of Oneida, New York, he practised law in the Empire State before coming to Schuylkill County in 1846. That first visit was for the purpose of examining coal land titles. He became a permanent resident of Pottsville in 1851. From his intense activity in the purchase of anthracite lands and in clearing titles, Tower betrayed the nature of his law practice. People suspected that he must have been representing a wealthy client, but some time elapsed before it became known that Alfred Munson of Utica, New York, was the client.

Tower and Munson had an agreement to buy up all available coal lands in the Pottsville Basin, a great tract stretching from the Lehigh to the Susquehanna. It was a speculative scheme: The coal lands would be held for the right buyer and until the appropriate time, to be sold for a huge profit. Tower was to share fifty per cent.

Tower had assembled his vast coal tracts before Franklin B. Gowen, President of the Reading, had embarked on his scheme to acquire all coal lands along the Reading's right-of-way as part of his plan of expansion and monopoly. In 1871, the year Gowen accumulated seventy thousand acres of coal lands, the two men made a deal.

Tower had asked \$3,000,000 for his anthracite real estate and got it, thereby earning a handsome profit as his share.

Charlemagne Tower left his comfortable Pottsville home along fashionable Mahantongo Street in 1875 to concentrate on the development of the Vermilion range of iron ore in Minnesota. It was a tremendous undertaking. Success depended on the building of a railroad from the iron ore mines to Lake Superior, a venture in which he almost sacrificed all the solid stocks and bonds he had bought with his anthracite money. He had difficulty raising finance capital to complete his project, but in the end the Munson family came to his support and saw him through the venture. Lake Superior iron ore was behind the movement of the iron and steel industry from eastern Pennsylvania to the western part of the state.

Charlemagne Tower, Sr., died in 1889. His son, Charlemagne, Jr., after retiring from business and law practice, entered the diplomatic corps in 1897 as U. S. Minister to Austria-Hungary. He was ambassador to Germany in 1902-1908.²³

Tower City occupies part of Charlemagne Tower's land, and so did the Brookside Colliery north of it, until it was abandoned. The Brookside originally was operated as two distinct collieries until their purchase and consolidation by the Philadelphia & Reading Coal and Iron Company.

The fame of the Brookside Colliery lives on in folklore through two ballads, one bearing the title, "Brookside." This ballad and another one ("It's the Union Man That Holds the Winning Hand"), both written in longhand with pencil, came to me unexpectedly in a letter dated June 10, 1957, from Jerry Byrne of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Byrne is one of the few surviving miner minstrels whose traditional ballads I had recorded on several occasions.

In a subsequent letter, Byrne explained how he happened to obtain these ballads, both of which were new to my collection. Parenthetically, many years ago, he was part of a group of elderly coal miners whom I had brought together for annual programs of the National Folk Festival. Several of these events took place in the Kiel Auditorium, St. Louis. One year a woman stopped Byrne outside the auditorium and offered him two manuscripts of ballads.

"The both songs," Byrne explained in his second letter of June 17, 1957, "were in longhand, and the paper was brown with age and falling apart. The woman met me outside of the Kiel Auditorium in St. Louis. She said she was from [the] Tower City section of the coalfields. She said her father wrote the song ["Brookside"] and she wanted somebody from the anthracite coalfields who would be interested to have them. She had heard us sing in St. Louis before and she decided to give them to me. She was then living in Kansas City, Mo."

Regarding the tune to "Brookside," Byrne wrote: "The Lady hummed a little of it for me; it is a simple little air." I could not find anyone in Tower City or elsewhere in the Williams Valley to sing it for me, but I did locate a worn and tattered copy of a broadside containing the text of the ballad, in the office of the West Schuylkill *Herald* in Tower City. It bore the title, "Brookside," and the byline of Alexander Wilson. William F. Knecht, publisher-editor, informed me that his father, the late William K. Knecht, founder of the weekly newspaper, was sympathetic toward the local balladists and

would print their broadsides, which were peddled for a few cents each.

The best remembered of the balladists was Alexander Wilson. His nickname was "Tug," but he preferred to be called "The Tower City Poet" because it was more dignified.

Tug Wilson was a picturesque character, but having died nearly half a century ago, he is remembered by only a few of his townsmen. He is believed to have come to Tower City from his native state of New Jersey. For some years he worked in the Brookside Colliery that inspired his ballad. Intelligent and talented, he stood out in the small mining community even though he was poor. The Wilson family, consisting of Tug and his wife, their two daughters and a son, are remembered by some residents as having lived at one time in a log house in Sheridan, a mine patch adjacent to Tower City. Wilson was slender, about five feet, eight inches in height, and wore a brown mustache. He was a shabby dresser; one elderly informant remembers his using a piece of rope for a belt to hold up his trousers. The competitive spirit was highly developed in him. He was considered the fastest walker, talker, and foot racer in the valley. He could carry a brick in his hand longer than anybody else while walking. He was also a champion horseshoe thrower. His competitions paid off in kegs of free beer and other prizes for which he did not have to dig coal. When his wife died, Wilson went to live in the Salvation Home in Pittsburgh where he died of apoplexy on April 28, 1915,²⁴ at the age of sixty-nine.

THE BROOKSIDE MINE DISASTER

The Brookside Colliery was the scene of the West End's greatest mine disaster. On "Black Saturday," August 2, 1913, the lives of twenty men—bosses and mineworkers—were snuffed out by an explosion, the memory of which has been kept alive by a ballad, "The Brookside Mine Disaster."

The irony of it is that all the victims might have escaped death had they not obeyed the unwritten law of the coal mines that a man must go to the aid of his fellow workers at the first sign of danger. The mine mules, knowing no law of conscience, stood pat during the disaster and not a single one of them was injured.

The Brookside, together with other Reading-owned collieries, had

been shut down temporarily two days before the disaster. The colliery's executive staff went down the slope as usual to inspect the inside workings and perform other routine duties. This explains why the death toll included the names of Superintendent John Lorenz, four other mine bosses, and other men who were in line for promotion. Had August 2, 1913, been a regular working day, some five hundred mineworkers, a majority of whom were Pennsylvania Dutch, would have been endangered.

There was a small working force in the mine on the fatal day—immigrant Italian muckers and their boss—nine men in all. Employed by Charles Portland, a Pottsville contractor, they were clearing rock debris in a tunnel being driven through rock strata when they felt the mine shaken by an explosion. It was 11:20 A.M.—the precise moment when the Italians' watches stopped.

That first explosion seems to have taken place in the gangway near the mouth of the rock tunnel. The Italians had been working at the face of the tunnel, a relatively safe distance away. In the belief that men might need assistance, they left their shovels standing in the muck and rushed toward the danger zone.

In another safe place, Superintendent Lorenz and Foreman John Farrell were informed by Harry Schoffstall, a young assistant fire boss, of an explosion near the mouth of the rock tunnel, and all three men ran in that direction to rescue the Italian muckers.

Meanwhile, surface signs of a mine explosion—puffs of dust from the fan house and from the mouth of the slope, together with muffled rumblings like distant thunder—had spread alarm on the surface. In keeping with mining custom, a squad of rescuers was hurriedly assembled and quickly lowered down the steep, pitched slope. As the rope unreeled, these men saw daylight fade quickly away. Upon arriving at the bottom they, too, headed for the mouth of the rock tunnel.

Just when all these men running from three different points had neared the scene of the original explosion (in the gangway, near the mouth of the rock tunnel), the mine was shaken by a second explosion, this one even more violent than the other. This is the explosion that was blamed for all the fatalities.

Later, when a second rescue party, led by District Mine Inspector Charles J. Price, was lowered into the mine and had penetrated the ruins left by the two explosions, their eyes met an appalling sight. Lying all about them were charred bodies, mutilated by the force of the explosions and by flying railroad spikes that had been exploded

out of their kegs; and some bodies of men who had died from afterdamp, a mine gas that spread after the explosions.

Superintendent Lorenz was one of the three men brought up alive. He was discovered by Inspector Price crawling along the gangway, his mining clothes burned or torn from his wracked body. Without a moment's hesitation, Price disrobed and put his own clothing on the injured superintendent, and then walked briskly back and forth in near-freezing temperature to keep his own nude body warm.

Lorenz lived only twelve hours after being rescued. At the Pottsville Hospital he gave his wife a deathbed account of what had happened. Brief, disjointed, but dramatic, this was the only story of the disaster that came from any of the men who were in the ill-fated Brookside mine at the time of the second explosion.

The Italian muckers were found in the tunnel, all dead but one. The lone survivor, after being removed to the surface, was rushed to the hospital on a railroad train, but he died on the way. The third live casualty, Harry Schoffstall, lingered a week at his home in Orwin in the Williams Valley and finally died from the effects of burns.

The bodies of two fire bosses, John Fessler and Daniel Farley, buried alive under dirt and rock, were not recovered until about two weeks later.

Everyone of the twenty victims died like heroes. Each had gambled with death to save human life, and lost. How unaccountable is the luck of the mine! One taken, and the other left. Only in the Brookside mine disaster, all twenty were taken.²⁵

One of the men overcome by grief was James T. Tallon of Tower City, a night fire boss at the Brookside Colliery, who was in the second rescue party. Three of his closest friends—John Farrell, foreman; and Daniel McGinley and Henry Murphy, fire bosses—were numbered among the dead.

Although he had had no prior experience in song writing, a ballad about the disaster began taking shape in his mind almost immediately. His son, Michael Tallon,²⁶ who is still living in Tower City, recalls that his father had some difficulty spelling some of the words and received help from him and his brother, Tom. Most of the writing was done in the stillness of his fire boss's shanty inside the mine under the light of a miner's carbide lamp.

The ballad was popular in the West End, according to Charles Kimmel of Keffers, Schuylkill County, and John Schneider of Lebanon,

Lebanon County, who sang versions into my microphone. I located both informants through the *West Schuylkill Press* and *Pine Grove Herald* published in Tremont, and that newspaper's neighbor, the *West Schuylkill Herald* of Tower City.

James T. Tallon was born in County Wicklow, Ireland, on May 10, 1875, and was sixteen when brought to the anthracite region by his mother. His son, Michael, describes his father as "heavy and raw-boned, with dark hair and large hands; he was quite jovial." The balladist died of apoplexy on June 11, 1935, at the age of sixty, and was buried in Sacred Heart Cemetery, Williamstown, Dauphin County.²⁷

THE BROOKSIDE MINE DISASTER

(Composed by James T. Tallon of Tower City, Schuylkill County, in the summer of 1913. Sung by Charles Kimmel at Pottsville, August 13, 1957. Variant sung by John Schneider at Lebanon, Lebanon County, August 12, 1957. Recorded by George Korson.)

It was in the month of Aug - ust, in the

year of nine - teen thir - teen, That we lost our friends and

com - rades; they'll nev - er more be seen, And in their

mem - 'ry, ev - er dear, I write this lit - tle line, To

tell you of those friends so dear, who died in Brook - side Mine.

1. It was in the month of August, in the year of nineteen thirteen
That we lost our friends and comrades; they'll never more be seen,
And in their memory, ever dear, I write this little line,
To tell you of those friends so dear, who died in Brookside Mine.
2. Upon the morning of that day, the sun shone bright and clear,
No thought of danger had we then, our comrades had no fear,
As they went down into the mine, as they often did before;
But the Hand of God must reach them, 'ere that day was o'er.
3. It was an awful tragedy that on this valley fell,
The cause of that explosion no living tongue can tell.
The lives of twenty who were in the mine the hand of death doth hold,
Not even one was left alive the mystery to unfold.
4. The miners of this valley did all that men could do,
In trying to save those comrades' lives, and honor is their due.
They rushed into that half-closed mine in hope there were some alive,
But they found their broken bodies in the lift of Number Five.
5. Farewell, John Farrell, our foreman, your death we do deplore,
And deeply mourn your sad end; on earth we meet no more.
To Dan McGinley, John Lorenz and Henry Murphy, too,
And all those other men at Brookside who died that day with you.
6. Adieu, dear Jack, old comrade, tho' fate has seemed unkind,
Those happy days together spent will oft be called to mind.
I pray the Lord have mercy, may the light of Heaven shine
On those our friends and comrades who died in Brookside Mine.

BROOKSIDE

(Broadside written by Alexander Wilson of Tower City, Schuylkill County, obtained from William F. Knecht, editor, *West Schuylkill Herald*, Tower City. Hand-written copy obtained from Jerry Byrne of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.)

1. If you'll listen to my ditty,
By a man from Tower City,
A collier like many hereabout;
You will find it worth your while,
And I'm sure 'twill bring a smile
And if you cannot smile just give a shout.
2. Those who climb the Brookside Mountain,
Do not reach a silver fountain,
But a mine of greater value can't be found;
For 'tis there we dig the ore
That you in your cellars store
And it's celebrated all the world around.
3. So to write a song about it
I have very often thought it
The greatest that anyone could do;
So the Tower City poet,
Would have everybody know it,
And this is how the Brookside Colliery grew.
4. First they did a little boring,
Then there came a mighty roaring,
And the people cried, "There's coal I do declare!"
So to test a little farther
They just bored a little harder
And the diamonds through the mountain soon did glare.
5. Then a mighty operation
Was in course of preparation,
Soon a breaker crowned the summit of the hill;
Now it's full of life and pleasure
Coal runs through it without measure
And a jolly set of boys its walls do fill.
6. Jerry Carl, and "Baldy" McDonald
Are the men who boss the tunnel,
And a happier pair you cannot easily find;
For they shake their big shillalah
And the boys laugh loud and gaily
While they wink their eyes and get down to the grind.

7. Augustus Heckler and "Top" Evans
Boss the loading and are given
 To cheer the boys and jolly them the while;
While they load the dusty diamonds
And slate and all the findings
 And send them to the top with song and smile.
8. Pat Berney also is a boss
Who saves the "Reading" many a loss
 While Harry Troutman's first outside the mine;
With half a dozen under
Whose voices ring like thunder
 When they make the boys get on the working line.
9. Fred Humbert and Bob Robinson
Have lasting honors for them won
 They hoist the men from underneath the ground;
So careful are those engineers
The miners often give three cheers
 For all the trusty men above the ground.
10. Roy Beider and George Rupp are they
Who run the "lokey" day by day
 And never fail in guiding it a-right;
While Laudermilich is the man
Who does the very best he can
 In keeping the scraper engine clean and bright.
11. Mr. Lewis who is the superintendent
Although very independent
 Is a man of genial traits and ponderous brain;
For he holds a high position
Which has brought him great distinction
 And a trifle in the way of money gain.
12. So hurrah for dear old Brookside!
All who work inside or outside!
 For the collier boys who dig the dusty ore;
May they all live long and prosper
The golden rule e'er foster
 And at last clasp hands upon the golden shore.

THE PLIGHT OF A MINER'S WIDOW

(A broadside "composed and written by Mrs. Clara Austin whose husband was killed in a coal mine at Tower City, Pennsylvania, November 18, 1881." Obtained from William F. Knecht, editor of West Schuylkill *Herald*, Tower City.)

1. Kind ladies and kind gentlemen, come lend a helping hand,
For I am a poor widow as you will understand;
My husband, he the best of men, was killed while in a mine,
Leaving me and my two children in this lonely world behind.
2. Oh, when he lived no care I knew, for all was happiness,
With him to look to for support and my children to caress;
I little thought that morning when we parted at the door
That I my loving husband would see alive no more.
3. He has gone up to a better world, his dangerous work is o'er,
Whilst we must struggle on below, he cannot help us more;
Yet one fond hope I cherish, and shall until I die
I will meet my loving husband in a better world on high.
4. We have a little house and lot, and on it there's a debt,
Which I must pay this coming fall, or out we'll have to get;
So I wrote these little verses, and took this little plan,
To try and save my children's home—I'll do the best I can.
5. My little boy is five years old, my little girl is three,
So they cannot help me much, as you can plainly see;
I want to pay the mortgage, and cancel out the debt,
And then my children's living I can make out to get.
6. Now in these little verses my case I've strived to state,
My story's one of sorrow and hard for to relate;
But when I think of him who's gone and my little children dear,
I cry sometimes, and then nerve up and onward persevere.
7. And now my little children—a suffering can it be?
No one but them is left me, no one to pity me!
Five cents you'll never miss, but sure to have the more,
Help the widow and orphan, and heaven will bless your store.
8. Now, kind ladies and kind gentlemen, buy my little rhyme—
In passing through life's journey you'll not miss half a dime;
In writing up these verses poverty is my defence—
One of these little rhymes of mine will cost you but five cents.

THE PHOENIX PARK COLLIERY

A coincidence, the kind collectors dream about, was responsible for my recording "Phoenix Park Colliery," a traditional anthracite miners' ballad. On August 24, 1957, during a recording session in his home at Hegins, Schuylkill County, Lee E. Schrope, a newspaperman and former school teacher, casually mentioned the fact that during his student days at West Chester (Pa.) Teachers College, he often heard his roommate, Patrick J. Lynch, also from Schuylkill County, sing a miners' ballad. Although he had heard it sung over and over again, he could no longer recall any of the lines.

However, Schrope did remember his former college roommate's current address at Laurel, Maryland. Almost a year later, on August 28, 1958, I called on Lynch and his wife. Lynch not only recorded "Phoenix Park Colliery," but several amusing stories. A native of Shenandoah, he was reared in Cass Township and spent fourteen years working in the Phoenix Park Colliery, northwest of Pottsville. It was a Reading property.

Lynch, who taught school in Cass Township for twenty years before moving to Maryland, said that he first heard the Phoenix Park miners singing this ballad when he was a boy early in the century.

"Phoenix Park Colliery" is in the "come-all-ye" tradition, typical of many local ballads created by anthracite miners in the nineteenth century.

(Sung by Patrick J. Lynch at Laurel, Maryland,
August 28, 1958. Recorded by George Korson.)

The musical notation is written on three staves in G major (one sharp) and 6/8 time. The melody is simple and folk-like, with lyrics written below the notes. The first staff ends with a double bar line, and the second and third staves continue the melody and lyrics.

Come all ye hard and hon - est work - ing - men, And
lis - ten un - to] me; I'll sing un - to you a
song A - bout the Phoe - nix Park Col - lier - y.

1. Come all ye hard and honest workingmen
And listen unto me;
I'll sing unto you a song
About the Phoenix Park Colliery.
2. It stands right here in Phoenix Park
You all may know it well;
Although it stands in Phoenix Park,
It may as well stand in hell.
3. We got a new outside foreman
And Bill Brown is his name;
He came out here from Minersville
This colliery to, to run.
Because he was an Irishman,
We thought we'd have some fun.*
4. But before the day was over,
He told us plumb and square;
That if we didn't watch our work
We wouldn't long be there.
5. There's "Snipey" Dormer, the breaker boss,
A snip of a man, they say;
He wants you to work as hard as a mule
For ninety cents a day.
6. Go out at seven in the morning,
Come home at dark at night;
Remember, boys, when payday comes
You'll all know how to fight.
7. For three hard months I worked there
And divil a cent I drew;
I walked right into Minersville
And swore Bill Brown I'd sue.
8. Next day the checks were all correct,
The pays were all O.K.;
And that's the way they treat the men
At the Phoenix Park Colliery.

* The last two lines of this verse are sung to the latter half of the melody.

IN THE COAL-MINES FAR AWAY

"In the Coal-Mines Far Away," not in the best tradition of anthracite ballads, bears a close resemblance to the English parlor ballad that was once so popular in this country, "The Dream of the Miner's Child." It comes out of a small pocket of the anthracite region—Columbia County.

Composed and copyrighted by Otto P. Ikeler in 1901, it must have had some oral circulation in Columbia County and perhaps in Schuylkill County, as Ikeler peddled his compositions and sang them for prospective customers.

"My own personal recollection of Mr. Ikeler," writes Professor Frank Kocher of the Pennsylvania State University, under date of July 14, 1958, "is from occasions when he came to our home in Espy (Columbia County) Pennsylvania, in the course of his selling trips. He peddled his compositions from house to house all over the county. Our copy of 'In the Coal-Mines Far Away' was first purchased by my grandfather, John Kline. He loved to hear my aunt sing it. . . . I do not think Mr. Ikeler had any experience as a mine worker, nor was he particularly Pennsylvania Dutch. The family is, of course, of German descent, and had some members fairly prominent in the county."

In a long-distance telephone conversation with me on Sunday, November 22, 1959, Professor Kocher remembered Ikeler as an eccentric bachelor, giving the following thumbnail sketch of him from memory: "In the early 1930's he was a man over fifty. He wore dark-rimmed glasses, his gray hair had thinned out, he was about five feet, eight inches in height, and was overweight. He was neatly dressed like a small-town professional man. He neither drank liquor nor smoked tobacco. His abstinence was somewhat puritanical.

I have a vivid recollection of him playing the piano with his short, stubby fingers."

(Words and music composed by Otto P. Ikeler in 1901.
Photostatic copy of sheet music contributed by Richmond
D. Williams, then Director, Wyoming Historical and Geological
Society, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania.)



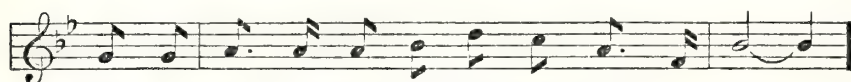
Once a fa - ther went to work down in a coal - mine,



And was do - ing his own breast work for the day



When it hap-pened man - y rocks fell down be - hind him,



And it shut him from his loved ones far a - way.



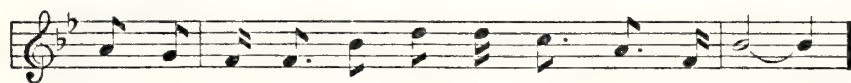
Quick the news did reach the break - er and the men all



made a rush To save the man but rocks were in the way;

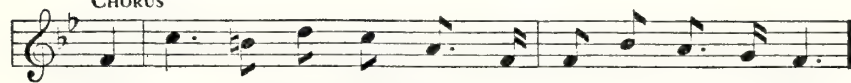


Then a girl soon told the fam - ily her sad sto - ry,

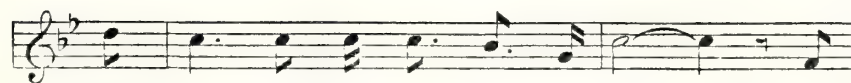


Of their pa - pa in the coal-mines far a - way.

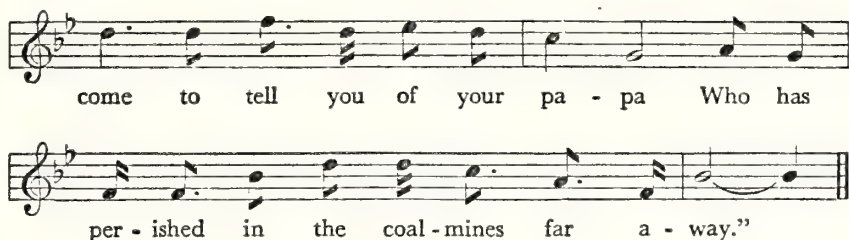
CHORUS



"O, do not weep dear friends, O, do not weep, I say;



Though sad my sto - ry, sad I say, I've



1. Once a father went to work down in a coal-mine
And was doing his own breast work for the day;
When it happened many rocks fell down behind him
And it shut him from his loved ones far away.
Quick the news did reach the breaker and the men all made a rush
To save the man, but rocks were in the way;
Then a girl soon told the family her sad story
Of their papa in the coal-mines far away.

CHORUS

- "O, do not weep, dear friends, O, do not weep, I say;
Though sad my story, sad I say,
I've come to tell you of your papa,
Who has perished in the coal-mines far away."
2. 'Twas a little brown-eyed lassie who came running,
Who did bring the message to the cottage door,
It was she who told the family her sad story
Said, "You'll never meet your papa as of yore."
Oh, the news near killed that mother as her tears fast ebbed away
The little ones knelt down to cry and pray
For they said, "We have no friend on earth like papa
Who has perished in the coal-mines far away."
 3. Oh, the miners worked with faith and greatest courage,
Moving each and every rock away with care;
But they found it was a great and sad disaster
Said, "We'll have to give the man up in despair."
Now the children ne'er shall meet their papa at the door yard
gate,
His loving wife no more for him shall wait;
But they'll ne'er forget the sad fate of their loved one,
Who is sleeping in the coal-mines far away.

AN OLD MAN FROM SWATARA

(Manuscript found among the possessions of
"Squire" Benjamin Hain Guldin and given to the Pottsville
Free Public Library by his granddaughter,
Alice Margaret Wilkenson.)

1. There was an old man from Shickshinny
Who traded his wife for a guinea;
The guinea was bad
But he didn't feel sad
This deceptive old man from Shickshinny.*
2. There was a young man from Llewellyn
Whose legs were all bent with white swellin';
He took a blue pill
Which soon cured the ill,
Of this crippled young man from Llewellyn.**
3. There was a young girl from West Penn
Who once bought a big Bramah hen;
The hen laid an egg,
As big as a keg
Which pleased the young girl from West Penn.***
4. There was a young damsel from Reading
Who used cabbage leaves for her bedding;
When the bed was worn out
She ate it for kraut
This herbivorous damsel from Reading.
5. There was an old man from Swatara,
He lived upon beef bones and marrow;
He laughed and grew fat,
And said, "How is that?"
This carnivorous man from Swatara.

* Luzerne County town.

** Schuylkill County town.

*** Schuylkill County townships.

6. There was a fair colleen from Cass
Who once saw her face in the glass;
Said she, "By my sowl
But it looks like an owl"—
This handsome young colleen from Cass.***
7. There was an old farmer of Blythe,
Who cut off his leg with a scythe;
"Alas for my breath,
I shall bleed to death,"
Said this careless old farmer of Blythe.***

HOW THE LOWLY POTATO SAVED THE UNION IN 1902

No labor strike in American history has been so thoroughly covered as the anthracite strike of 1902. The basic document consists of fifty-six volumes of testimony taken by President Theodore Roosevelt's arbitration commission. The award ending the strike did not formally recognize the United Mine Workers of America in the anthracite industry, but recognition did come before long. Countless newspaper and magazine articles and many books on the 1902 strike have been published, including my own summaries in *Songs and Ballads of the Anthracite Miner* and in *Minstrels of the Mine Patch*.

Now that the printed record is complete, fresh material of that historic event can come only from folklore—from the memories of the men and women who had been part of it—from men like Thomas Kennedy, President of the United Mine Workers of America, who was a breaker boy at the time.

Just such fresh material came my way during my 1957 field research in the West End of Schuylkill County—one of the most curious stories I had ever heard about that famous strike, and to think that it had escaped printer's ink all those years!

Following is the story as it appeared in the *United Mine Workers Journal* under my byline on January 1, 1958, illustrated by a cut showing John Mitchell posing at the top of a mound of potatoes:

The name of John Schroepe, Pennsylvania Dutch farmer of the Hegins Valley, near Pottsville, Pa., will not be found in histories of the United Mine Workers of America. Yet in the darkest hour

of the famous anthracite strike of 1902, he was singled out by John Mitchell, then President of the United Mine Workers of America, as the symbol of sympathy and practical support that the striking miners were receiving from Pennsylvania Dutch farmers whose lands lay close to the mine patches of Schuylkill County.

With the passing of summer and no relief from the cities yet in sight, starvation threatened many of the families of the striking 140,000 men and boys. Realizing that the lowly potato was a staple item of the miners' diet, President Mitchell hoped and prayed for a bumper crop that fall. With potatoes plentiful and cheap, he knew that the striking mine workers could hold out indefinitely until he got the operators around the collective bargaining table.

In September, John Mitchell's prayers were answered when he heard of the bumper crop of potatoes raised by the Pennsylvania Dutch farmers of the Hegins Valley, potato-raising center of Schuylkill County. At the same time he learned that the top man there was John Schrope, who had a yield of about 500 bushels to the acre, exceptional, indeed, for those days. An agricultural expert has calculated that Schrope's 500 bushels were the equivalent of about 30,000 pounds, enough, he said, to sustain 150 large families for a month.

Elated, John Mitchell made a special trip from Wilkes-Barre to see the mound of potatoes in John Schrope's barn, and he had his picture taken standing at the top of it. Mrs. Charles Bressler, 82, of Fountain, in the Hegins Valley, a miner's widow, recently recollected that she and her husband walked to John Schrope's farm to shake hands with the strikers' leader and listen to him explain why potatoes meant so much to the Union cause in that strike. Mrs. Bressler said hundreds of Pennsylvania Dutch miners who worked in the Lincoln, Brookside, and other great collieries that have since been abandoned, walked miles to greet their leader that day.

That day, Mitchell also stopped off at nearby Tremont where he got an enthusiastic reception. William "Billy" Harner, 84, charter member of Tremont Local Union of the U.M.W.A., recalled that the Pennsylvania Dutch strikers spread a carpet for Mitchell from his train to the Philadelphia & Reading R. R. depot as a mark of respect. Led by the Tremont Cornet Band, whose members were all mineworkers and members of the Union, Mitchell marched to the baseball grounds where he made a speech to a crowd of wildly enthusiastic mineworkers. Valentine Bomm, 80, and George Hauser, 75, both of Tremont, are the only Tremont Cornet Band survivors.

Elderly Pennsylvania Dutch miners of the West End like to talk about that great labor struggle in which they participated so long ago. Those miners who lived on farms naturally fared better than

their co-workers in mine patches and in the cities. Regardless of their economic situation, the majority of the Pennsylvania Dutch gave a good account of themselves in that struggle, and later built strong local unions.

Ironically, their chief opponent during the 1902 strike was a Pennsylvania Dutchman, George F. Baer, President of the Reading, who was spokesman for the coal mining corporations. Baer unwittingly made a permanent place for himself in the folklore of that strike. He is remembered chiefly for his "divine right" letter which brought him derision and turned public opinion against the coal operators.

By contrast, John Mitchell's memory is revered in the anthracite region, and "John Mitchell's Day" is still celebrated each year.

IT'S THE UNION MAN THAT HOLDS THE WINNING HAND

The following ballad was composed by Edward Craig, blind minstrel of St. Clair, Schuylkill County. Craig was born in South Wales like so many of the pioneer Welsh miners of the anthracite industry of Pennsylvania, but he was not a mineworker. At twelve, when he was brought to the United States, he started working on the Schuylkill Canal. It was on the canal, at Bordentown, New Jersey, that he was blinded by the kick of a mule.

This accident ended his career as a canaller. Now he had to rely on his own natural gifts to make a living, so he began making ballads about the miners' way of life, singing them, fiddling, and storytelling. He was loved by the miners of St. Clair and surrounding territory.

Craig's granddaughter, Mrs. Ronald Wehner of St. Clair, with whom the folk minstrel made his home for many years, recalls that as a little girl it was her hand that led him around to the improvised stages on which he entertained. Pay day at the mines was the best time for him to display his talents before groups of miners, she said. The best stages were the saloons where the miners gathered to whoop it up while their money lasted. Mrs. Wehner led him to a saloon. He would put on his show in the middle of the floor where his hat caught the coins of appreciation thrown into it.

Mrs. Wehner would remain outside while her grandfather per-

formed. Then after a reasonable interval, she would stick her little face under the swinging doors and ask timidly, "Are you ready, Grandpa?"

Craig died in March, 1934, when he was eighty-four years old.

(Composed by Edward Craig of St. Clair, Schuylkill County, in 1902. Contributed by Jerry Byrne of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, former resident of Buck Run, Schuylkill County.)

1. Your attention, friends, we now will ask while I will sing to you
 What Mother Jones and John Mitchell came in our state to do.
 They organized in the coal fields a great and mighty band
 That did wipe out the sliding scale and formed a one to stand;
 They told the operators, too, that they should do what's right,
 And if they did not come to time the miners would all strike
 When Mitchell gave them due notice of what he wanted done
 They laughed so he kept up the fight until the day was won.

CHORUS:

"I told you," said John Mitchell, "there soon would come a day
 When a scale of pauper wages would have to pass away.
 I told those operators, too, who ruled the great coal fields
 That the miners were in a union, and would hold the winning
 hand.

If you only pull together, boys, like men, and not like scabs
 You soon can eat and drink best, and wear good clothes, not rags;
 You can tell all those millionaires that they cannot wrong you.

2. We know the corporations all united long ago.
 To regulate the price of coal and keep the poor man low.
 But if our boys will stick to John, he'll soon show them the day
 When men will only have to work a fair day for fair pay.
 He'll close the company stores, and lower powder, too,
 And pay all those who work for them in cash for what they do.
 He'll show all those millionaires and make them understand
 That the day has passed, thank God at last, when they can rule the
 land.

WHAT MITCHELL HAS DONE FOR THE MINERS

(Composed by Edward Craig of St. Clair,
Schuylkill County, in 1902.)

1. For the mining class a glorious star is working
 One whose golden deeds I wish to show to you.
He has gained for those who were for years repining
 Many treasures that they were entitled to.
He organized a band to show those coal kings
 That their starving scale of wages would not do.
And he set the operators all a-thinking
 Of the ten per cent they had to grant to you.

CHORUS:

You must treat your workmen right
Then they'll have no cause to strike.
This is what John Mitchell wants you all to do.
And to give your men an honest scale of wages
Then the mining class will go to work for you.

2. We all know he gained the strike of nineteen hundred
 And another, greater one in Nineteen Two.
That's the time he made those tyrants knuckle under
 And to say, we now will arbitrate with you.
Some of those many wrongs were then adjusted
 That they practised on the mining class all through
By the Arbitration Board that was appointed
 For to try and settle matters just and true.

REFRAIN:

You should treat your workmen right
Then they'll have no cause to strike.
This is what Judge Gray advised you all to do.
And to give your men an honest scale of wages
Then John Mitchell men will stay at work for you.

3. Once again he forced those schemers to surrender
 And to recognize his famous Union, too
He gave them ample time to think and ponder
 O'er the many things that they will have to do.

He said to them you do not need to wonder
At the raise I'm asking once again from you
For you know the miners' wages is still under
The standard that they are entitled to.

THREE MEN CAME TO COALDALE

The anthracite folk song tradition was strong in the East End of Schuylkill County, in the Panther Valley. This was the domain of the Lehigh Navigation Coal Company (formerly the Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company). The tradition was carried on by Welsh and Irish miners and by some of Pennsylvania Dutch descent. Outstanding bard and folk minstrel was Joe Gallagher of Lansford who contributed three of his songs to *Minstrels of the Mine Patch*. One of these ballads was "Three Jolly Welshmen," in a light vein. Albert "Abby" Morgan, a retired miner of Tamaqua, used it as a model for his ballad, "Three Men Came to Coaldale." Technically it is a variant of Gallagher's ballad, but Morgan has put so much of himself in it that it could be said to be a new song by him. Both the tune and the text are his own.

When I told Morgan that he might not become part of this book because it was all about the Pennsylvania Dutch, he wrote me a long letter, dated March 26, 1960, in which he listed all the Pennsylvania Dutchmen who had worked with him in the mines and who were part of his musical life. What clinched it for him, however, was the fact that he married his wife, Clara, whose father, Thomas Barton, was an early Pennsylvania Dutch settler in Tamaqua.

On August 27, 1957, Abby sang six mining ballads for me in the Newkirk Tunnel mine near Tamaqua, and "Three Men Came to Coaldale" was one of them. It is the same place where I recorded his Slavic dialect song, "Union Man," in 1946 for the Library of Congress. Now part of the Archive of American Folk Song album XVI, this song is also on a commercial record label as "Unee Man."

In 1920 Abby joined a quartet, and in 1944 he organized an octet, "The Old Company Singers," for whom he wrote many topical mining ballads. The octet disbanded when the Old Company shut down its mines.

(Sung by Albert B. Morgan at Tamaqua, Schuylkill County,
August 27, 1957. Recorded by George Korson.)

Three men came to Coal-dale, To work in the mines, John
Jen - kins, John Mor - gan, John Jones, A job they did
look for Oh! so man - y times, John Jen - kins, John
REFRAIN
Mor - gan, John Jones, John Jen - kins, John Mor - gan, John
Jones, John Jen - kins, John Mor - gan, John Jones,
To give up, no nev - er; these men were too
clew - er, John Jen - kins, John Mor - gan, John Jones.

1. Three men came to Coaldale to work in the mines,
John Jenkins, John Morgan, John Jones;
A job they did look for, oh! so many times,
John Jenkins, John Morgan, John Jones.

CHORUS

- John Jenkins, John Morgan, John Jones,
John Jenkins, John Morgan, John Jones.
To give up, no never; these men were too clever,
John Jenkins, John Morgan, John Jones.
2. A job they did get; it was their one desire,
John Jenkins, John Morgan, John Jones;
Next mornin' they found out the mines was on fire,
John Jenkins, John Morgan, John Jones.
3. "Now what shall we do?" said those coal miners three,
John Jenkins, John Morgan, John Jones.
"Let's all go to Scranton"; this they did agree.
John Jenkins, John Morgan, John Jones.
4. They went to Mauch Chunk there to board on a train,
John Jenkins, John Morgan, John Jones;
And when they got there it was pouring down rain,
John Jenkins, John Morgan, John Jones.
5. A corner saloon was the right place to go,
John Jenkins, John Morgan, John Jones.
How they got to Scranton is more than I know,
John Jenkins, John Morgan, John Jones.

SOURCE NOTES

CHAPTER I

1. Ele (or Eli) Bowen, *The Coal Regions of Pennsylvania* (Pottsville, Pa., 1848), p. 18.

2. Recorded July 1, 1958.

The following excerpt is from Bressler's letter, dated March 30, 1960: "The points and other artifacts recovered fit very nicely into the Laurentian pattern, of which the Lamoka focus (Lake Lamoka in New York) is considered the type station. The absence of even soapstone pottery, presence of many net stones, etc., tend to verify our identification. Furthermore, these people seemed to concentrate on fishing to supplement their hunting activities, which separates it from the Early Archaic, a predominantly hunting culture . . ."

Apropos of Bressler's Indian paint stone, there were occasions in early American history of settlers making paint from anthracite before they had learned to burn it. Worcester, Massachusetts, is one of the towns where this was done. Anthracite was the basic ingredient of "Black Lead," a paint used on roofs and rough exteriors. (Josephine H. Peirce, *Fire on the Hearth* [Springfield, Mass., 1951], p. 18.)

In 1808 a patent was issued to Jacob Cist of Wilkes-Barre on his invention of a mineral black for printers' ink, leather lacquer, and other products.

3. George Henry Loskiel, *History of the Mission of the United Brethren among the Indians in North America*, translated from the German by Christian Ignatius La Trobe (London, 1794), p. 11.

4. George Henry Loskiel, *The History of the Moravian Mission among the Indians in North America* (London, 1838), p. 107.

In Webster, the first definition given of coal is, "A piece of glowing carbon or a thoroughly charred fragment of wood." Is the Indian penitent referring here to glowing wood rather than mineral or "stone" coal?

5. Loskiel, *op. cit.* (1794 ed.), p. 55.

6. Paul A. W. Wallace, *Conrad Weiser, 1696 - 1760: Friend of Colonist and Mohawk* (Philadelphia, 1945), pp. 133-44.

A religious sect stemming from John Huss, the Moravians were unique among pioneer German settlers in Pennsylvania in that they professed to have come to the New World for the purpose of converting the Indians to Christianity.

7. Oscar Jewell Harvey and Ernest Gray Smith, *A History of Wilkes-Barre, and Wyoming Valley, Pa.* (4 vols.; Wilkes-Barre, Pa., 1927).

8. C. W. Unger, "Schuylkill County," in *Southeastern Pennsylvania: A History of the Counties of Berks, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, Philadelphia,*

and Schuylkill, supervising ed. J. Bennett Nolan (Philadelphia and New York, 1943), II, 1007.

9. See George Korson, "Who Was the Discoverer of Anthracite?" in *Minstrels of the Mine Patch* (Philadelphia, 1938), pp. 302-306, for discussion of this point.

10. Ralph Beaver Strassburger and William John Hinke, *Pennsylvania German Pioneers: A Publication of the Original Lists of Arrivals in the Port of Philadelphia from 1727 to 1808*, published by the Pennsylvania German Society, ed. William John Hinke (3 vols.; Norristown, Pa., 1934). Philip Ginder's signature with a "d" appears on List III C, p. 362; also a certified copy of his signature on the same occasion, dated September 9, 1909.

11. *Pennsylvania Archives*, Third Series, XIX, 342.

12. Sources consulted include the following:

The Baptism Book of Rev. Daniel Schumacher (an Evangelical Lutheran minister), trans. and typed by Arthur G. Schuman (Reading, Pa., 1957). It contains the names of all children that Schumacher baptized in Berks, Lehigh, Northampton, and Schuylkill Counties between 1754 and 1774. The original copy is preserved at Mt. Airy Seminary, Philadelphia.

The Pastoral Record of the Rev. John Waldschmidt, Lancaster County. Includes baptisms, marriages, and catechumens confirmed between 1752 and 1786. Translated by William J. Hinke, January, 1943, for the Historical Society of the Evangelical and Reformed Church. There is a second volume by his son, Rev. John Waldschmidt, Jr.

Original tax lists of the eighteenth century are in the possession of the Historical Society of Berks County.

13. Unger, *op. cit.*, pp. 955 ff.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 969.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 973.

16. *Genealogical Data: Relating to the German Settlers of Pennsylvania and Adjacent Territory, from Advertisements in German Newspapers Published in Philadelphia and Germantown, 1743-1800*, compiled by Edward W. Hocker (Philadelphia, 1935).

17. Conrad Weiser Papers (1757-1766), The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, II, 109. Spycker was president judge of Berks County Court (1763-1790).

18. Unger, *op. cit.*, p. 973.

19. The original letter is in the Bassler-Unger Collection of the Fackenthal Library of Franklin and Marshall College, Lancaster, Pennsylvania. This copy was made with permission:

"The Bassler-Unger Collection had its inception in the collections of the late Claude W. Unger of Pottsville, book dealer, genealogist, local historian, and antiquary. After the death of Mr. Unger his collection was purchased by Dr. Harvey A. Bassler of Myerstown, Pennsylvania, retired petroleum geologist, who had just begun to collect within the field of Pennsylvania German history and folklore. The Fackenthal Library assigned quarters to Dr. Bassler for the housing of his collection, and he was in process of sorting and classifying it, when his tragic death in 1950, ended the work he had begun. By court action, the collection was awarded to the Pennsylvania German Society, which in turn assigned it to the custody of the Fackenthal Library.

"The collection, which is still in process of cataloging, consists of books, periodi-

cal and newspaper files, manuscripts, pictures, scrapbooks, as well as a large group of Mr. Unger's transcripts from church records, family histories, and public documents, etc. The field of the collection is largely Pennsylvania local history with particular emphasis on the Pennsylvania Germans."—Miss Elizabeth Kieffer, Archivist, Bassler-Unger Collection.

20. Deed dated June 9, 1798, for 308 acres sold by Philip and Magdalena Ginder to Adam Miller of Lynn Township, Northampton County.

21. Fred Brenckman, *History of Carbon County, Pa.* (Harrisburg, 1913), p. 458.

22. United States census of 1800 in Penn Township, Northampton County, Pa.

23. Brenckman, *op. cit.*, pp. 261–62.

I. Daniel Rupp, *History of Northampton, Lehigh, Monroe, Carbon and Schuylkill Counties* (Harrisburg, 1845), pp. 181–86.

Alfred Matthews and Austin N. Hungerford, *History of the Counties of Lehigh and Carbon in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, 1884), pp. 573 ff.

24. Matthews and Hungerford, *op. cit.*, p. 593.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 593.

26. *Ibid.*, pp. 717–18.

27. *The Letter Book of Jacob Weiss, Deputy Quartermaster General of the Revolution*, ed. Melville J. Boyer (Allentown, Pa., 1956), pp. 9 ff. Rupp, *op. cit.*

28. Letter from J. Benson Adams to me, dated September 25, 1957, in which he wrote that Ginder had "trained his son, Jacob, to be an excellent carpenter and millstone grinder."

For corroboration, see Fred Brenckman, *History of Carbon County, Pa.* (2d ed.; Harrisburg, 1918), biographical sketch of Philip III containing the following paragraph: "Philip Ginder, the original, had two sons, Philip and Jacob. Philip Ginder [III], subject of this sketch, was born August 16, 1820, and was one of the eleven children of Jacob Ginder who, in the year 1825, came to Mahoning Valley from West Penn Township, Schuylkill County, where he followed the business of making millstones . . ."

29. Mathew Schropp Henry, *History of the Lehigh Valley* (Easton, Pa., 1860). The author was a son of Judge William Henry of Nazareth, a Moravian, who was one of the charter subscribers to the stock of the historic Lehigh Coal Mine Company in 1792.

30. This is a fresh detail in the Philip Ginder story, which will be proved later in this chapter.

31. Alden Todd, "Coal through the Centuries," *United Mine Workers Journal*, September 1, 1958.

32. Colonel Weiss's mother was Rebecca Cox, Hillegas's mother was Deborah Cox, both of Philadelphia, according to Mrs. Elmer L. Mack of Bethlehem, a descendant of Colonel Weiss. I obtained this information over the telephone on July 6, 1956, after having been referred to Mrs. Mack by Moravian Church national archives.

Another source: Bishop Joseph Mortimer Levering, *A History of Bethlehem 1741–1892* (Bethlehem, Pa., 1903).

33. Cist was married to the colonel's sister, Mary Weiss of Bethlehem.

34. See note 39.

35. Prospectus for Lehigh Coal Mine Company, *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, XXXIV, 171–75. See also the Mauch Chunk *Democrat*

of April 25, 1891, for copy of the same prospectus loaned to the *Democrat* by mine operator Eckley B. Cox, as quoted in Korson, *Minstrels*, p. 306.

36. This acreage represented most of the coal property owned by the successor corporation, the Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company, during about a century and a quarter in business.

37. Western end of the Panther Valley.

38. Bishop Levering, *op. cit.*, p. 641.

39. The patent, dated March 17, 1797, recorded in Philadelphia, Patent Book A, XXI, 350.

The Letter Book of Jacob Weiss, p. 21.

40. Zion Union Church—Lutheran and Reformed—is now the mother church of three other congregations in the Mahoning Valley: Ben Salem, East Penn; St. Peter's, West Penn; and St. John's in New Mahoning. All four churches are on the Mahoning circuit, a Lutheran pastor serving the four congregations of his denomination, and an Evangelical and Reformed pastor ministering to the spiritual needs of his four congregations.

41. The deed was dated January 25, 1808.

42. The original copy of the viewers' certificate is preserved in the office of the Division of Public Records, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Harrisburg. Ginder's name is misspelled "Gintner" in *Pennsylvania Archives*, Ninth Series, III, 2185.

43. Matthews and Hungerford, *op. cit.*

44. Regarding family tradition, the folk hero's great-grandson, Grant D. Ginder of Weatherly, Pa., wrote me as follows under date of January 27, 1956: "I remember hearing my father, who was a grandson of Philip Ginder, the discoverer of coal, say that after losing his tract of land . . . he became discouraged and moved to a mountain in the vicinity of Wilkes-Barre. After that they lost trace of him." Grant D. Ginder was 85 years old when he died on May 23, 1958.

Philip M. Ginder of Palmerton, a great-great-grandson, writes me under date of April 3, 1957: "My father (the late David P. Ginder) and grandfather Philip III always said the discoverer was lost on a hunting trip in the vicinity of Berwick."

45. *Memoirs of The Historical Society of Pennsylvania* (September, 1826), I, pt. II.

46. Local name for Sharp Mountain.

47. *Colonial Records*, IV, 312. Quoted in Russell Wieder Gilbert, *A Picture of the Pennsylvania Germans*, The Pennsylvania Historical Association Studies (1947), p. 45.

48. Korson, *Minstrels*, p. 306.

49. From *Pennsylvania Archives*, Third Series:

Vol. XIX, p. 258, under Penn Township, Northampton County, Philip Ginder is listed as the owner of 300 acres in 1786.

Vol. XIX, p. 342, "Provincial Papers of Northampton and Northumberland Counties for the Years 1772 to 1787," Philip Ginter is credited with a tax payment of five pounds, five shillings, on 100 acres of land in Penn Township.

Vol. XXVI, p. 83, "Warranties of Land, 1730-1898," Philip Ginter is listed under "County of Northampton, 1752-1886" as owning 150 acres and 50 acres respectively, both tracts surveyed on November 11, 1786.

Vol. XXVI, p. 84, Ginder is listed as the owner of two other tracts, 25 acres and 50 acres respectively, both surveyed on June 4, 1789.

The 50-acre tract is described in the (June 4, 1789) warrant as follows: "over the blue Hills adjoining lands of Peter Everit, Michael Ohl, Sebastian Lavan and George Hand, on the Southside of Lizard Creek in Penn Township, in the County of Northampton."

On May 31, 1872, George Kershner and others paid \$36.30 in full arrearages and fees for a tract of 78 acres in West Penn Township, Schuylkill County (formerly Penn Township, Northampton County), that had been surveyed in pursuance of a warrant to Philip Ginter on June 4, 1789. This patent is filed in the Land Office of the Department of Internal Affairs, State Capitol, Harrisburg, Pa. Recorded in Patent Book H, LXX, 433.

50. Hazard's *Register of Pennsylvania* published the Dr. James version together with extracts from two letters bearing internal evidence of having been inspired by the physician's narrative.

One of the letter writers was Erskine Hazard, a founder of the Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company, who describes the early struggles of the anthracite industry and its pioneers. His opening sentence reads as follows: "The coal on the Lehigh was accidentally discovered in the year 1791 by a hunter who observed it adhering to the roots of a tree which had been blown down."

The second letter was written by Judge Jesse Fell of Wilkes-Barre to his cousin, Jonathan Fell of Philadelphia, dated December 1, 1826—about two months after publication of Dr. James's narrative in the *Memoirs*. Judge Fell describes his successful experiment on February 11, 1808, when he burned anthracite in an open grate without the aid of a forced draft.

51. Bowen, *op. cit.*, pp. 18–20.

52. (Note 52 omitted.)

53. The coal discoverer's descendants maintain that the correct spelling of their family name is with a "d," as in "Ginder."

54. *The Story of the Old Company* (Lansford, Pa., 1941), a pamphlet.

55. J. Benson Adams interview was recorded in the board room of the Summit Hill Trust Company, Summit Hill, Carbon County, on August 27, 1957.

56. Russell Davies interview was recorded in his office in the Newkirk Tunnel mine, one mile west of Tamaqua on August 27, 1957.

57. The Ella Zerbey Elliott book was published at Pottsville, 1906.

58. Necho Allen's wife died on January 31, 1833, aged 72 years, according to her headstone in Pottsville's Presbyterian cemetery.

59. The Necho Allen Hotel, located at Centre and Mahantongo Streets, was opened for business on November 3, 1927. This site has had a hotel or tavern on it almost as long as there has been a Pottsville. John Pott, the city's founder, owned the White Horse Tavern on the same corner.

60. The face really belonged to the late Edwin C. Luther, Pottsville civic leader. On the hotel's opening night, Luks turned to Edith Patterson and said: "I didn't know what this fellow [Necho] Allen looked like, and neither did anyone else. So he might just as well look like Luther as anybody else."

That was characteristically Luksian. It was my privilege to know the artist slightly in 1925 when he was in Pottsville painting the people of the anthracite

mining industry—the miners, their wives, and children. He had a robust love of life, an amazing virility, and a profound understanding of people. These human qualities, together with the artist's enthusiasm for his subject matter and a vivid realism, made him the ideal painter to transmute the humor, the tragedy, and the poetry of anthracite mining life to paint and canvas. John Sloan said of him: "Luks was a dynamic figure in the American art of his time." Born on August 13, 1867, in Williamsport, Luks spent his boyhood in Shenandoah, a mining town in Schuylkill County. Undoubtedly he was the greatest Pennsylvania Dutch painter to have come out of the anthracite region. His death in the street at dawn was typically Luksian. He lived like Hals and Goya and died like Poe.

61. Edward Redline interview was recorded in the board room of the Summit Hill Trust Company, October 1, 1957.

62. Letter dated Lansford, Pa., January 21, 1957.

63. *The Letter Book of Jacob Weiss*, p. 21.

64. Philip M. Ginder made this typewritten transcript available in time for me to use it in a lecture at the 65th annual meeting of the Pennsylvania German Society on the campus of The Pennsylvania State University on October 21, 1955. My topic was: "The Pennsylvania German Influence on the Anthracite Mining Industry."

The lecture was divided between Philip Ginder and general information. The Ginder material was printed in the Allentown *Sunday Call-Chronicle* of November 13, 1955, under an eight-column heading: "Meet Philip Ginder—New Hero of American Folklore." The article was reprinted (without my prior knowledge) in the *Congressional Record* of March 15, 1956, under an extension of remarks by Rep. Daniel J. Flood of Luzerne County, Pennsylvania.

65. The 150th anniversary of Philip Ginder's discovery was celebrated by the Panther Valley Community from August 28 through September 1, 1941. Highlight of the program was the unveiling of a granite memorial in the southwest corner of the Summit Hill Borough Park by Philip M. Ginder, great-great-grandson of the coal discoverer.

On April 9, 1891—the 100th year—a bill was introduced in the Pennsylvania state senate entitled, "An act appropriating the sum of one thousand dollars for the erection of a monument to the memory of Philip Ginter, the discoverer of anthracite coal in Pennsylvania." Next week the senate proceeded to the second reading when the amount was increased to two thousand dollars. On April 20 the senate finally passed the bill by 29 to 2. In the house, however, the bill encountered opposition from other parts of the anthracite region. It was referred to the committee on appropriations which reported it with a negative recommendation. The bill was defeated in the lower house.

For many years during the nineteenth century the approximate spot of Ginder's discovery at Summit Hill was marked by a high clay bank. Because the outcropping of the Mammoth seam lay close to the surface, the coal was mined simply by removing the surface earth and quarrying the coal on the outcrop. This open-air quarry won international fame as "The Great Mine."

The clay bank was leveled to make room for a new Summit Hill high school. This tribute to their famous ancestor pleased the family, with one reservation—the Ginder name on the school was engraved with a "t." Later, however, when the high school stadium was built, the family name was spelled correctly with a "d."

Philip M. Ginder, a resident of Palmerton, Carbon County, is a direct descen-

dant of the folk hero. He was born in Rockport, Carbon County, on May 26, 1889. His father, David P. Ginder, died in 1938 at the age of 74. His son, David R. Ginder, M.D., lives in Youngstown, Ohio, where he is Director of Medical Instruction for Saint Elizabeth's Hospital.

Major General Philip D. Ginder, U.S. Army (ret.), son of the late Grant D. Ginder of Weatherly, Carbon County, is also a great-great-grandson of the coal discoverer. General Ginder, much decorated military hero of World War II and the Korean War, is married to Jean Dalrymple, noted Broadway writer and producer.

CHAPTER 2

1. Richard Richardson, *Memoirs of Josiah White* (Philadelphia, 1873), p. 39.
2. Eleanor Morton, *Josiah White, Prince of Pioneers* (New York, 1946), p. 104.
3. Elizabeth Myers, *Nature, History and Other Lore*, scrapbook of newspaper clippings in the Bethlehem, Pa., Public Library.
4. Stewart Pearce, *Annals of Luzerne County* (2d ed.; Philadelphia, 1866), p. 371.
5. Thomas Hill, "A Journey on Horseback in 1799 from New Brunswick to Lycoming County, Pa.," *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, XIV, 192.
6. M. S. Henry, *History of the Lehigh Valley* (Easton, Pa., 1860), p. 378.
7. Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 58.
8. John Binns, *Recollections* (Philadelphia, 1854), p. 265.
9. Myron D. Edmonds, "One Hundred Years of Anthracite. The Romance of Schuylkill County's Principal Industry As Reflected in the Files of the Pottsville *Journal* during the Century Past," *Pottsville Journal*, 1925. Schuylkill County histories.
10. Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

Charles Miner's letter of November 17, 1833, to Samuel J. Packer, chairman of the committee appointed by the senate of Pennsylvania to report on the coal trade of the state. Quoted in pamphlet No. 1, *Centennial Anniversary of the First Shipment of Anthracite Coal from the Lehigh Region at Lausanne, Pa.*, published by the Carbon County Historical Society (Mauch Chunk, Pa., August 9, 1914).

11. Miner's letter, pp. 11-17. See above.
12. Charles Miner afterwards served in the state legislature and in Congress and distinguished himself in both. From original research he wrote a history of the Wyoming Valley that was standard for many years.

The original text of "James Bird" and the story of how it came to be written appear on pp. 67-76 of Charles F. Richardson and Elizabeth Miner (Thomas) Richardson, *Charles Miner, a Pennsylvania Pioneer* (Wilkes-Barre, Pa., 1916). "James Bird" is one of the rare old American traditional ballads that did not originate with the folk. Nevertheless, it has been popular with the common people ever since its appearance in Charles Miner's *Gleaner* in 1814. Although originally printed, it owes its life to oral dissemination. Many variants have been collected in different parts of the country. Bird's home was in Exeter, a suburb of Wilkes-Barre, which explains Miner's special interest in the unfortunate young man. The ballad derives its emotional power from the tragic episode that inspired Miner's

pen. Bird had served gallantly under Perry in the Battle of Lake Erie. Yet not long afterward he was tried for desertion and shot.

13. Oscar Jewell Harvey and Ernest Gray Smith, *A History of Wilkes-Barre, and Wyoming Valley, Pa.* (4 vols.; Wilkes-Barre, Pa., 1927), pp. 1821-22.

14. Frederick M. Binder, "Anthracite Enters the American Home," *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, January, 1958, pp. 82-99.

15. Stewart Pearce, *op. cit.*, p. 370.

16. Miner's letter, see note 10.

17. James A. Gordon, "Reminiscences," *Wilkes-Barre Record*, February 4, 1874.

18. Miner's letter.

19. Gordon, *op. cit.*

20. *Ibid.*

21. "Cider ile" was the way Cider Royal was generally pronounced in those days. James A. Gordon, author of the quoted article, explains it in a footnote as follows: "'Cider ile' was simply boiled cider, with about two gallons of whiskey added to the barrel to keep it intact. It was a favorite beverage with our German population at that period."

22. Gordon, *op. cit.*

23. Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

24. Miner's letter.

25. Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

26. *The Story of the Old Company* (Lansford, Pa., 1941), pp. 15-17.

27. Richard Richardson, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 57.

29. Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 113.

30. *Ibid.*

31. *Ibid.*; Richard Richardson, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

32. Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 114.

33. Korson, *Minstrels of the Mine Patch* (Philadelphia, 1938), pp. 35-36.

34. Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 135.

35. Fred Brenckman, *History of Carbon County, Pa.* (Harrisburg, 1913), p. 264.

36. Philip M. Ginder, "Development of Mining and Transportation of Anthracite Coal," *The American Forest Protector*, March-April, 1929.

Solomon W. Roberts, "The Mauch Chunk Railway, 1829," *Railway World*, March 22, 1879. Reprinted in *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, V (1881), 360-61.

Morton, *op. cit.*, pp. 246-47, 281.

Historical Sketch of the Switch-Back Railroad, descriptive pamphlet sold to tourists of the Mauch Chunk, Summit Hill, and Switchback railroad before 1933.

The Switchback was Josiah White's last major contribution to the development of the Panther Valley and the Lehigh Valley. White died in 1850. White also planned the famous Ashley Planes, which closed a twenty-mile gap between White Haven, terminus of the Lehigh Canal, and the city of Wilkes-Barre, by solving the problem of a steep mountain grade. Only three or four miles separate Ashley from Solomon's Gap, but the railroad tracks, now a part of the Central Railroad of New Jersey, wind around the mountain for seventeen miles, descending thirteen hundred feet in three planes.

37. Richard Richardson, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

38. *The Story of the Old Company*, p. 30.

39. But for this arrangement, Summit Hill might have been built up much sooner than it was. In 1826, when the coal quarry was developing, there were only five houses, all of log construction, in the vicinity of the present borough. Only one of them, occupied by James Lehman, a company foreman, had two stories (Brenckman, *op. cit.* [1913 ed.], p. 324).

In its heyday Summit Hill attracted many tourists from all over the world. The visitors viewed the coal quarry, called "The Great Mine," until its abandonment in 1844. After 1859 they came to watch the Burning Mine, or "Everlasting Fire," which raged in the underground mines for more than half a century before it was choked off. And, of course, the famous Switchback Railroad drew its share of tourists after it was converted into a summer excursion train. Today there is hardly anything in Summit Hill to remind one of its exciting past.

40. These arks made only one trip, then were broken up and sold for lumber in Philadelphia. Spikes, hinges, and other hardware were salvaged and carried back to Mauch Chunk on foot by the boatmen; later the boatmen rode back on wagons provided for them by relays of innkeepers. Shipment by arks in time proved inadequate, and so it was decided to build the Lehigh Canal from Mauch Chunk to Easton, forty-six miles. Passing through the state-owned Delaware River Canal between Easton and Philadelphia, and through the Morris Canal between Easton and Newark, later extended to Jersey City, the Lehigh Canal provided direct routes by water from Mauch Chunk to Philadelphia and New York respectively.

41. Morton, *op. cit.*, pp. 130-31.

42. *Ibid.*, p. 131.

43. Binder, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

44. *Ibid.*, p. 98.

45. Quoted by Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 134.

46. Josephine H. Peirce, *Fire on the Hearth: The Evolution and Romance of the Heating-Stone* (Springfield, Mass., 1951), p. 35.

47. *Ibid.*, pp. 39 ff.

48. *Ibid.*, pp. 143-47.

George L. Heiges, *Henry William Stiegel: The Life Story of a Famous American Glass-Maker* (Manheim, Pa., 1937).

49. Peirce, *op. cit.*, pp. 147, 169.

50. Harvey and Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 1814 ff.

51. *Ibid.*

52. Binder, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

53. Harvey and Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 1814 ff.

54. Richard Richardson, *op. cit.*, p. 66.

55. Peirce, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

56. *Ibid.*, p. 126.

57. Binder, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

58. Ele Bowen, *The Coal Regions of Pennsylvania* (Pottsville, Pa., 1848), p. 22.

59. Richard Richardson, *op. cit.*, p. 66.

60. *Ibid.*

CHAPTER 3

1. Sarah A. McCool, "Schuylkill County Historic Gleanings," chap. XLI of a series of articles in the *Shenandoah Herald*, November 14, 1874.

2. *Ibid.* Folklore assigns the character "Hunkee Punkee" in Alder's poem to Lapackpitton, a Delaware chief, who, at the close of the French and Indian War, presided over an Indian village on the site of the present Catawissa (*History of Columbia and Montour Counties, Pa.*, ed. J. H. Battle [Chicago, 1887], p. 273).

3. Colonel Lindenmuth was born "into a wretched world," according to his diary, in Boedigheim, near Mainz, Germany, in 1737, and immigrated with his parents to Philadelphia in 1752. The family settled in Windsor Township, Berks County, a mile from the Blue Mountain and a mile from the Schuylkill River. They were often driven from their home by hostile Indians.

Colonel Lindenmuth saw action in the French and Indian War. When the Revolutionary War broke out, he promptly enlisted in the patriot army, and rose from the rank of major to that of colonel in the Pennsylvania Militia. He was commissioned colonel of the Third Battalion, Berks County Militia, in 1777. This outfit took part in Washington's campaign around Philadelphia until the general went into winter quarters at Valley Forge when it presumably returned to Berks County Militia. Part of the battalion was stationed at Fort Augusta (Sunbury) after the Wyoming Massacre. The Colonel marched with a relief party after the Neyman massacre at Pottsville.

In 1780 Colonel Lindenmuth was elected Justice of the Peace for Bern Township, Berks County. Ten years later he acquired 404½ acres of land on Catawissa Creek with a portion of his army back pay. He was on his way to Washington to try to collect large sums of money that he had loaned to the army's commissary department during the Revolutionary War when he died suddenly in Baltimore.

William T. Stauffer, "Revolutionary Soldiers: Colonel John Michael Lindenmuth," in *Annals of the Sugarloaf Historical Association*, II (1935), 18-20. References cited: *Pennsylvania Archives*, Fifth Series, V, pp. 22, 189, 194, 201, 208, and 213; and *Pennsylvania German Pioneers*, I, 481 (see chap. 1, note 10).

4. The Eastern Middle Field, the Western Middle Field with Shamokin as its center, and the Southern Field, encompassing Schuylkill and Carbon Counties and small slices of Dauphin and Columbia Counties, are coal mining areas having a more or less Pennsylvania Dutch cultural association. The Northern Field, which includes Wilkes-Barre and Scranton, has the least. Even there some Pennsylvania Dutch penetration is indicated by the mining town of Swoyersville on the west side of the Susquehanna River near Wilkes-Barre; it was named for Henry Swoyer, a Pennsylvania Dutch pioneer coal operator.

5. Sir John Johnson was a son of Sir William Johnson, British baronial landlord of New York's Mohawk Valley, who died in 1774. At the outbreak of the Revolutionary War, the British relied on Sir John's considerable influence with his tenants and neighboring Indians to hold the valley for them. However, before he could do much damage to the cause of American Independence, he was arrested in his baronial mansion, Johnson Hall, and his arms and stores confiscated by patriots. Released on parole, he fled to Canada, which he used as a base of opera-

tions for frequent and devastating raids against patriotic settlers, especially those in the Wyoming Valley.

6. William T. Stauffer, an address, in *Annals of the Sugarloaf Historical Association*, I (1934), 20-21.

7. Charles Rhoads Roberts, Secretary, Lehigh County Historical Society, in an address, "Pennsylvania Germans and the Revolution," at the commemoration of the Sugarloaf Massacre, Conyngham, September 9, 1934; quoted from Lieutenant Colonel Stephen Balliet's letter to President Reed of the Supreme Executive Council, dated September 20, 1780.

8. Charles Rhoads Roberts address.

9. *Ibid.*

10. *Ibid.*

11. Bill Bachman in a series of historical articles, *Hazleton Standard Sentinel*, 1955, quoting Stewart Pearce, *Annals of Luzerne County* (Philadelphia, 1866).

12. Bachman, *op. cit.*

13. Rosemarie Boyle, Hazleton Public Library four-page leaflet, "Highlights of Hazleton's History."

14. Reverend F. J. Uberroth, "St. John's Reformed Church Oldest in Butler Valley," historical article in *Hazleton Plain Speaker*, November 26, 1932.

15. Boyle, *op. cit.*

16. *Hazleton Plain Speaker* series of historical articles, July 29, 1932, and November 18, 1932. Also Beider Wellington Wilde, "The Company Store in the Early Mining Communities," in *Annals of the Sugarloaf Historical Association*, II (1935), 54 ff.

17. Wilde, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

18. Ralph Kreamer, "Chunk's 'Wonder Boy' Did Much for Anthracite," *Carbon County Panorama* 137, Allentown *Sunday Call-Chronicle*, August 26, 1956.

19. Excess mine water has been a serious problem ever since underground mining began. Water seeps down from the surface rains through crevices in the earth and rock strata. It may also come from an underground stream. Furthermore, a miner unwittingly may blast a hole through the wall of an adjacent flooded mine releasing a torrent of water. This occurred at Jeansville, near Hazleton, on February 4, 1891. Seventeen miners were trapped, only four of whom survived twenty-one days in a waterlogged hell, to be rescued.

20. *The New York World*, 1927.

21. When John Markle sold his Jeddo Highland Coal Company in 1926 he retired from business activity to devote the rest of his life to philanthropy. Having no children, he left his vast fortune to humanity, establishing and endowing the John and Mary R. Markle Foundation, which the New York Legislature incorporated effective March 31, 1927.

The Foundation reports that in the first quarter century of its existence it had distributed from income more than \$13,700,000 toward the support of various charitable, philanthropic, scientific, and educational enterprises. In recent years grants-in-aid have been awarded to qualified candidates engaged in basic medical research.

22. Elsie Gluck, *John Mitchell, Miner* (New York, 1929), p. 118.

23. *John Markle, Representative American*, ed. Robert J. Spence (New York, 1929). Privately printed edition of 300 copies.

24. *Shamokin Diamond Jubilee*, Shamokin, Pa., June 25—July 1, 1939 (a souvenir booklet containing a section entitled "History of Shamokin Borough").

25. W. Irvine Wiest, "The Centennial of the Cameron Colliery," in *The Northumberland County Historical Society Proceedings and Addresses*, IX (May 1, 1937), 158.

26. Chester D. Clark, "Pioneer Life in the New Purchase," in *The Northumberland County Historical Society Proceedings and Addresses*, VII (May 1, 1935), 16-44.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 17.

28. Walter E. Boyer, Albert F. Buffington, and Don Yoder (collectors and editors), *Songs along the Mahantongo* (Lancaster, Pa., 1951), p. 10.

29. *Ibid.*, p. 9.

30. J. J. John, author of chapters on Shamokin, Trevorton, and Mount Carmel, in *History of Northumberland County, Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, 1876).

John was himself a pioneer, having come to Shamokin in 1853, at a time when many of the original settlers were still living, and so he had the benefit of contact with them. His chapters contain folklore obtained orally from settlers, which is blended with local history.

31. Pennsylvania Dutch folklore version of *Eulenspiegel*, fourteenth-century German symbol of folk humor.

32. John, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

33. *Shamokin Diamond Jubilee*.

34. *Ibid.*

35. *Ibid.*

36. *Ibid.*

37. John, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

38. *Shamokin Diamond Jubilee*.

39. *Ibid.*

40. "This name is found in various forms here in Northumberland County, Mourer, Maurer, Mowery and Moury being common . . . The family came from Germany to this country and first settled in Berks County, later moving to the Mahantongo Valley in Northumberland County" (*Genealogical and Biographical Annals of Northumberland County, Pennsylvania* [Chicago, 1911], p. 287).

Jacob Mowry was the last survivor of Shamokin's first settlers. He died April 9, 1875. He was twice married and was the father of nineteen children.

41. Wiest, *op. cit.*, pp. 141-42. This agreement, according to Wiest, is recorded on p. 714 of deed book "Z" in the Northumberland County Recorder of Deeds office in Sunbury.

42. Wiest, *op. cit.*, p. 142.

43. *Ibid.*, p. 149.

44. John, *op. cit.*, p. 84.

The correct spelling of this family name is "Fagely." The family, of German origin, was founded in America by Jacob and Eve Fagely who immigrated from Germany in 1733 (*Genealogical and Biographical Annals of Northumberland County* [Chicago, 1911], pp. 81-82).

Despite his paternalism in the period 1842-1852, Uncle Reuben Fagely was elected to two terms as Shamokin burgess in 1868 and 1869.

45. Henry Darwin Rogers (1808-1866), professor of geology and mineralogy at the University of Pennsylvania, was appointed head of the Pennsylvania survey in

1836. Lack of appropriations delayed the survey between 1841 and 1851. In the latter year it was resumed, and completed in 1854. The final report, written by Professor Rogers, is embodied in his book, *The Geology of Pennsylvania: A Government Survey* (Philadelphia, 1858).

46. *Genealogical and Biographical Annals of Northumberland County, Pennsylvania*, p. 17.

47. The town was named for John B. Trevor, an investor in the project.

48. *Trevorton 1853 - 1956* (one hundredth anniversary hard-cover volume of a souvenir program [1956]).

49. *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7; and John, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

CHAPTER 4

1. "Women Started Delphian Society in 1920," J. H. Zerbey Newspapers, Inc., *History of Pottsville and Schuylkill County* (Pottsville, Pa., 1936), p. 144.

The Pottsville Chapter of the (Afternoon) Delphian Society was organized by Pottsville women in the Y.M.C.A. on August 18, 1920, according to this history. "During this year [1923] they turned their attention to the Indian Head on the mountainside on the Pottsville-Schuylkill Haven highway. The head was painted so that it could be seen more distinctly and a sign was erected, pointing to the Indian" (pp. 144-45).

2. Some time after I had written these paragraphs about the custom surrounding the Indian Head, I received disturbing news from Pottsville: vandals, apparently youthful ones, had defaced the Indian Head. The *Pottsville Republican* of May 4, 1959, carried a three-column cut of the stone face painted with three large initials of a Greek-letter fraternity, four given names, probably of the vandals, and the figures, '59, probably representing their graduation class. "While the defacing is believed to have been a mere prank, intended as a stunt," stated the news story, "there has been serious complaint regarding the recurring vandalism. The Indian Head, a peculiar formation of a rock strata of the elevation is one of the few striking landmarks in this vicinity. Citizens have taken trouble to keep it properly protected. But repeated vandalisms have made the situation difficult."

Reflecting the community's reaction to this act of juvenile delinquency, the *Republican* of May 6 published an editorial under the heading, "Who Could Stoop So Low?" Following is an excerpt: "Lower than a snake's belly . . . That's the expression some people have used to describe the vandals who smeared paint on the Old Indian landmark along the Schuylkill Haven highway over the weekend. The feeling persists that they were outsiders. People doubt that anyone living in this area could stoop so low. There is an affection here for the old hunk of stone that has stood as a silent sentinel for years in the valley—since the first days of Pottsville . . ."

3. The correspondence is reproduced in D. C. Henning, *Tales of the Blue Mountains*, Publications of the Historical Society of Schuylkill County (Pottsville, Pa., 1911), III, 155-65.

The contemporaneous records of the Pennsylvania Provincial authorities there-

by confirm the historic fact of an event that had been kept alive by folklore for more than a century. This is a striking example of how folklore serves history and historians.

4. Ralph Kreamer, "Carbon County Panorama," *Allentown Sunday Call-Chronicle*, December 2, 1956; "Tamaqua Borough," in *History of Schuylkill County* (New York, 1881). Half of the original log house built by Berkhard Moser is still standing in the rear of 307 E. Broad St. at the base of Dutch Hill, Tamaqua.

5. James A. Reichley, three articles on P. W. Sheaffer and the Sheaffer family, in *Pottsville Republican*, beginning November 19, 1959; *The Biographical Encyclopedia of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, 1874), p. 228.

6. It was Unger who introduced me to the West End in the summer of 1931.

7. Ele Bowen's *The Coal Regions of Pennsylvania* (Pottsville, Pa., 1848) carries a statistical table of mining operations in and near Schuylkill County. Some of the coal mining firms having one or more Pennsylvania Dutch partners are Morgan & Hines, Sillyman & Fister, Charles Miller, J. Greenawault, Snyder & Barr, Heil & Bower, Henry Eckel, Reinoehl & Gardner, Gideon Bast & Co., Charles Miller & Co., J. D. Steinberger, Spangler & Barndt, Reichert & Stapleton, Forster & Butler, Jacob Wernitz, Fosold & Ebert, Daniel Bertsch, Leisenring & Nunamacher, M. G. & P. Heilner, A. Heebner & Sons, and H. Guiterman & Co.

Coal tracts, collieries, and even some coal seams bear such names as Spohn, Heil & Bower, Bonewitz, Faust, and Herbine.

Coal-land owners: Brock, Culp & Hammer, Alspach & Bast, Seitzinger & Wetherill, Greenewalt & George, Gideon Bast, Spayd & Luther, Alter & Struthers, J. Hoffman, John Alspach, and A. F. Miller & Co.

8. P. D. Luther, "Development of the Coal Production Trade in Schuylkill County," in *History of Schuylkill County* (New York, 1881), p. 54.

9. *Ibid.*

10. Edward Pinkowski, *Forgotten Fathers* (Philadelphia, 1953), pp. 233-51.

11. *Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania: Genealogy, Family History, Biography* (2 vols.; Chicago, 1916), I, 496.

12. *History of Schuylkill County*, p. 258.

13. Schuylkill County Unit of the Federal Writers' Project, WPA collection in the Pottsville Free Public Library.

14. Myron D. Edmonds, "The True Necho Allen Lived in This Section Over Half a Century," *Pottsville Journal*, October 30, 1926. Schuylkill County histories.

15. C. W. Unger, "Schuylkill County," in *Southeastern Pennsylvania: A History of the Counties of Berks, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, Philadelphia, and Schuylkill*, supervising ed. J. Bennett Nolan (Philadelphia and New York, 1943), II, 1005-1006.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 1007.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 1008.

18. *Ibid.*

19. *Ibid.*, p. 1011.

20. John Pott, founder of Pottsville, was born on January 16, 1759, in Rockland Township, Berks County, and died intestate on October 23, 1827. The Pott family progenitor in Pennsylvania was Wilhelm Pott, the founder's grandfather, who emigrated from Germany in 1734 on the same ship that brought a colony of Schwenkfelders; but he was not a member of that religious sect. John Pott's immediate family consisted of his wife, Maria Leshner, and the following children:

John, Jr., Magdalena, Benjamin, James, Abraham, Mary, Catherine, William, and Jacob. In 1810 the family moved into the Alspach house, which was located at the corner of what are now Baber and Mauch Chunk Streets. Here Pottsville's first female child, Hannah Pott, was born; she was married to Lawrence Whitney. During 1815-1816 John Pott built a stone mansion for his family.

A. Howry Espenshade, *Pennsylvania Place Names* (State College, Pa., 1925), pp. 145-46, 228-29.

J. H. Zerbey Newspapers, Inc., *History of Pottsville and Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania* (5 vols.; Pottsville, Pa., 1936), pp. 1953-54.

21. Zerbey, *op. cit.*, p. 2090.

22. Edith Patterson. "Pottsville's Picturesque Past," souvenir program, *Pottsville's Sesquicentennial Celebration* (Pottsville, Pa., 1956), pp. 3 ff.

23. Reminiscences of Michael F. Fitzpatrick, for twenty-eight years principal of the Yorkville (Pottsville) School. Quoted in Zerbey, *op. cit.*, p. 2082. For a list of early mining operations within the present limits of Pottsville, see Zerbey, *op. cit.*, pp. 53-55.

24. Zerbey, *op. cit.*, p. 2122.

25. Bowen, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

26. Dives, Pomeroy & Stewart, *History of the County of Schuylkill* (Pottsville, Pa., 1911), p. 78: "Its [Pottsville] people are principally native born, frugal, peace-loving citizens, but when necessary, they always respond to the call for help. They are descended from sturdy German stock, principally."

On October 13, 1900, the Sunday School Superintendents Association made an "exhaustive religious census of Pottsville and vicinity." The members of the Pennsylvania Dutch creeds—Dunkards, Evangelical Association, German Lutherans, English Lutherans, Mennonites, German Reformed, English Reformed, United Brethren, and United Evangelical—far outnumbered the Baptists, Episcopalians, Methodists, and Presbyterians. Many Pennsylvania Dutch people belonged to the latter congregations. (Zerbey, *op. cit.*, pp. 1961-62.)

German language papers appeared early in the history of Pottsville and Schuylkill County. For example, the *Stimmen Des Volks* (Voice of the People) was founded in 1828 in Orwigsburg as the official organ of the Democratic Party, and later moved to Pottsville. (Zerbey, *op. cit.*, p. 1958.)

27. Patterson, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

28. John Sanderson, "Our Village," *The Knickerbocker*, XV, no. 6 (June, 1840), 501-12.

29. *Ibid.*

30. Bowen, *op. cit.*, p. 29. At this time (1829-1830), Orwigsburg was still the county seat, and the statute governing imprisonment for debt, later repealed, was still in effect. Pottsville became the county seat in 1847.

31. *Ibid.*, pp. 27-29.

CHAPTER 5

1. Sylvester K. Stevens, *Pennsylvania Titan of Industry* (New York, 1948), I, 206-207.

Ralph H. Sweetser, *Blast Furnace Practice* (New York, 1938), p. 118.

W. S. Sanner and J. W. Eckerd, "Laboratory Scale Experiments in the Production of an Agglomerated Anthracite Metallurgical Fuel," Anthracite Experiment Station, Bureau of Mines, Department of the Interior, Schuylkill Haven, Pa., pamphlet, p. 54.

Anthracite Institute Bulletin, February 15, 1956, pp. 1-2.

2. Arthur C. Bining, *Pennsylvania Iron Manufacture in the Eighteenth Century*, Pennsylvania Historical (and Museum) Commission (Harrisburg, Pa., 1938), IV, 29-48.

3. George Korson, *Minstrels of the Mine Patch* (Philadelphia, 1938), pp. 27-28.

4. Stevens, *op. cit.*, p. 215.

"Blythe Township," *History of Schuylkill County* (New York, 1881), p. 160.

Sarah H. McCool, "Historic Gleanings," Shenandoah, Pa. *Herald*, February 20, 1875, chap. LV.

5. *The Story of the Old Company*, hard-cover booklet published by the Lehigh Navigation Coal Company, Inc., as a souvenir of the 150th anniversary celebration of the discovery of coal at Summit Hill (Lansford, Pa., 1941), p. 24.

6. Ele Bowen, *The Coal Regions of Pennsylvania* (Pottsville, Pa., 1848), p. 33.

7. Stevens, *op. cit.*, p. 215.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 216.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 145.

10. *Ibid.*, pp. 206-207.

CHAPTER 6

1. Herman L. Collins ("Girard"), "When Pottsville Was a Famous Port," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, July 25, 1929. The columnist of "Girard Talk of a Day" is quoting here from Thomas T. Ash, *Gentleman's Pocket Almanac* (Philadelphia, 1831).

2. Wheaton J. Lane, *From Indian Trail to Iron Horse: Travel and Transportation in New Jersey 1620-1860* (Princeton, 1939), Introduction by Thomas J. Wertenbaker.

3. "This Newcomen Address, based upon canal and railroad records still preserved after over 100 years, was delivered at the '1946 Schuylkill Valley Luncheon' of The Newcomen Society of England, held in Mr. Brown's honor in the Ballroom of The Necho Allen, at Pottsville, Pennsylvania, U.S.A., on June 26, 1946." R. W. Brown (President of the Reading Company), a pamphlet, *The Reading Railroad—An Early History* (Princeton, 1946), p. 22.

With his brother as a partner in A. & B. W. Packer, Asa Packer built boats for the Schuylkill and Lehigh canals. Asa Packer was one of the leading men of America in his time. He built the Lehigh Valley Railroad, one of the major anthracite roads, and operated coal mines. He was an associate judge of Carbon County and served for two terms as a representative in Congress. He founded Lehigh University.

4. Brown, *op. cit.*, pp. 7-8.

5. *Ibid.*, pp. 17-18.

6. *Ibid.*

7. *Ibid.*, p. 19.
8. Lewis Edwin Theiss, "Canallers," in *Pennsylvania Songs and Legends*, ed. George Korson (Philadelphia, 1949), p. 261.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 288.
10. Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 23.
11. *Ibid.*; and Ele Bowen, *The Coal Regions of Pennsylvania* (Pottsville, Pa., 1848), p. 51.
12. Brown, *op. cit.*, pp. 23-24.
13. *Ibid.*
14. John B. Bowman MS of Schuylkill County canal lore in the Pottsville Free Public Library.
15. *Ibid.*

CHAPTER 7

1. But for a short line at Quincy, Mass., built in 1826, Pennsylvania would have had the distinction of pioneering railroad building in the United States.

"Pennsylvania, however, may claim credit not only for the next American tramway [the famous Switchback Railroad], but for such a manifestation of energy in the earliest day of railway construction as surpassed the united efforts put forth by the rest of the United States in this direction . . . This growth, remarkable for the period, is attributable to the contemporaneous development of the anthracite . . . lands . . . Joseph S. Ward, Resident Manager, Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company, "Reconstruction of Mahanoy Plane," in *The Pilot*, XV, No. 3 (March, 1914), 69 ff.

2. R. W. Brown, a pamphlet, *Some Aspects of Early Railroad Transportation in Pennsylvania*, p. 7. "Address delivered before the Pennsylvania Historical Association, Dickinson College, Carlisle, Pennsylvania, October 21, 1949."

3. R. W. Brown, a pamphlet, *The Reading Railroad—An Early History* (Princeton, 1946), p. 27.

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 24-25.

5. John F. Bell, "Frederick List, Champion of Industrial Capitalism," *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, LXVI, No. 1 (January, 1942), 56-83.

6. *Ibid.*

7. *Ibid.*

8. *Ibid.*

9. Brown, "Some Aspects . . .," p. 9.

10. Bell, *op. cit.*, pp. 56-83.

11. *Ibid.*

12. Jay V. Hare, "History of the Reading," serialized in *The Pilot and Philadelphia & Reading Railway Men*, published monthly by the Reading Railway Department, Young Men's Christian Association of Philadelphia. Hare's first article appeared in Vol. X, No. 5 (May, 1909), p. 2. This paragraph appears in Vol. XIII, No. 2 (February, 1912), p. 39.

13. *Pennsylvania Archives*, second series, XVII, 75.

Progenitor of the Brobst (Probst) family, from which Christian Brobst descended, was Han Michael Probst who had emigrated from Germany via Rotterdam on the ship, *Samuel*, which arrived at Philadelphia on August 17, 1733.

14. *Historical and Biographical Annals of Columbia and Montour Counties, Pennsylvania*, I (2 vols.; Chicago, 1915), 44-45.

15. *Ibid.*

16. *Ibid.*

17. *Ibid.*

18. Walter S. Farquhar, "Cressona's Rufus A. Wilder," in column entitled "Editorial Musings," *Pottsville Republican*, September 9, 1957.

19. Brown, *The Reading Railroad*, p. 21.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 20.

21. George Korson, "The Old D. & H. Gravity," in *Songs and Ballads of the Anthracite Miner* (New York, 1927), pp. 98-100.

22. Joseph S. Ward, "Reconstruction of Mahanoy Plane," in *The Pilot*, XV, No. 3 (March, 1914), 69 ff.

23. Harry Emerson Wildes, *Lonely Midas: The Story of Stephen Girard* (New York, 1943), pp. 289-90.

24. *Ibid.*, p. 290.

25. James Archbald (Engineer and Agent of the Girard Estate), "The Girard Coal Estate," *Pottsville Republican*, July 21, 1923.

"PHILADELPHIA, March 9 (AP)—Judge Robert V. Bolger of Orphans Court approved transfer today of \$75,335,890 in cash assets of the Girard estate from the Board of City Trusts to a new board of thirteen private trustees.

"Not included in the accounting is approximately \$25,000,000 in coal lands and other real estate.

"The trustees use the funds to administer Girard College.

"The new board was created with court approval to carry out provisions of the will of Stephen Girard, which stipulated that only white orphan boys could attend the college. The United States Supreme Court ruled that if the city board administered the school's affairs Negroes would have to be admitted."—*The New York Times*, March 10, 1959.

26. Ward, *op. cit.*, pp. 71-72; *Pottsville Republican*, March 21, 1914.

27. Wildes, *op. cit.*, p. 358.

28. Louis J. Livengood, "Dutchisms in English," in *'S Pennsylvawnisch Deutsch Eck*, ed. Preston A. Barba. Allentown *Morning Call*, August 19, 1944. Adapted from Dr. Graeff's own column, *Scholla* ("Echoes") in the *Reading (Pa.) Times*, June 12, 1944.

29. *Ibid.*

30. Hare, *op. cit.*, August, 1909, p. 2.

31. *Ibid.*, September, 1909, p. 3.

32. *Ibid.*, May, 1909, p. 8.

33. Howard C. Frey, "Conestoga Wagoners," in *Pennsylvania Songs and Legends*, ed. George Korson (Philadelphia, 1949), p. 237.

34. Hare, *op. cit.*, August, 1909, p. 3.

35. *Ibid.*, September, 1909, p. 6.

36. George B. Haas (ed.), *History of Pine Grove, Schuylkill County* (Pottsville, Pa., 1935), p. 87.
37. "A Veteran Engineman of One of the First Coal Burners," *The Pilot*, X, No. 11 (November, 1909), 10.
38. W. H. Keffer (Reading Superintendent), "Railroaders Then and Now," *The Pilot* (November, 1909), p. 25: "I remember the day of railroading when a conductor could not read and write, and some of them were passenger conductors."
39. Myron D. Edmonds, "One Hundred Years of Anthracite," *Pottsville Journal*, 1925.
40. Ward, *op. cit.*, p. 72.
41. P. D. Luther, "Development of the Coal Production Trade in Schuylkill County," in *History of Schuylkill County* (New York, 1881), p. 53.
42. George Korson, *Minstrels of the Mine Patch* (Philadelphia, 1938), pp. 206-207.
43. Marvin W. Schlegel, *Ruler of the Reading: The Life of Franklin B. Gowen, 1836-1889* (Harrisburg, 1947), p. 14.
44. Korson, *Minstrels*, p. 222.
45. Schlegel, *op. cit.*, p. 4.
46. *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.
47. *Ibid.*, pp. 6-8.
48. Korson, *Minstrels*, pp. 229-30.
49. Schlegel, *op. cit.*, p. 25.
50. *Ibid.*, p. 27.
51. *Ibid.*, p. 35.
52. *Ibid.*, p. 53. "The Laurel Run Improvement Company," the stock of which was all owned by the Reading, had a comparatively brief existence. By permission of a Philadelphia court, the name was changed, in December, 1871, to the "Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company."
53. *Ibid.*, p. 38.
54. Korson, *Minstrels*, p. 225.

CHAPTER 8

1. Richard C. Taylor, "Notice of a Model of the Western Portion of the Schuylkill or Southern Coal-Field of Pennsylvania," *American Journal of Science and Arts*, Vol. XLI, No. 1. (An address before the Association of American Geologists read on April 9, 1841.)
2. Henry K. Strong (chairman of committee), *Report to the Legislature of Pennsylvania*, "containing a description of the Swatara Mining District" (Harrisburg, 1839), p. 10.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
4. Fannie Belle Richardson, *Eisenhower Lineage and Reference, 1691-September 3, 1957*, "A complete set of the series of bulletins on Eisenhower family history which were issued between August 20, 1956 and December 31, 1957," mimeographed (Greenwood, Ind., 1957), p. 5.
5. *Ibid.*

6. *Ibid.*, p. 17.

7. Lloyd M. Bellis, "The Eisenhowers in the Lykens Valley," *The Gratz Sesqui-centennial* (Gratz, Pa., 1955), pp. 55-56.

8. *Ibid.*; and Richardson, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

9. Richardson, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

The New York Times of July 30, 1959, carried a story reporting that a military ancestor in the Revolutionary War had been found for President Eisenhower by Ross K. Cook, a past genealogist general of the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution. The President forwarded this supplementary data with his signature in July to the Empire State Society of the S.A.R. He had joined the society in 1945 'on the strength of his descent from John Peter Eisenhower of Pennsylvania, who supplied foodstuffs for the Colonial forces at Valley Forge in 1776, when he was 60 years old.' The *Times* story indirectly quoted a spokesman to the effect "that the society is open without distinction to all who can prove descent from anyone who helped the American cause, whether in the armed forces or not."

Cook provided the documentation for the President's supplementary application:

"According to Mr. Cook's findings, the President's paternal grandmother, who was Rebecca Matter before her marriage to Jacob Frederick Eisenhower, was the great-granddaughter of John Mater, who spelled the name with only one 't.'"

"John Mater, believed to be an immigrant from the German Rhineland, was a resident of Upper Paxton Township, about twenty miles north of Harrisburg on the banks of the Susquehanna River. He was a private in Capt. Albright Deiblin's company and fought in the Battle of Long Island in 1776 when he was 26. Other records show him a soldier in Capt. Martin Weaver's company, also in Dauphin County, in 1781 and in the Seventh Company of the Lancaster County militia in 1782.

"The Battle of Long Island took place on the morning of Aug. 27, 1776."

10. Taylor, *op. cit.*

11. George B. Haas, *History of Pine Grove, Schuylkill County*, (Pottsville, Pa., 1935), p. 279; Adolph W. Schalk and Hon. D. C. Henning (eds.), *History of Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania* (Madison, Wis., 1907).

12. George Wheeler, "Annals of the Swatara," *West Schuylkill Press and Pine Grove Herald*, November 18, 1938 ff.

13. Not all the Delawares were on the British side in the Revolutionary War. The famous Captain White Eyes and his party joined the Americans at Pittsburgh.

14. C. W. Unger, "Schuylkill County," in *Southeastern Pennsylvania: A History of the Counties of Berks, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, Philadelphia, and Schuylkill*, supervising ed. J. Bennett Nolan (Philadelphia and New York, 1943), II, 969-70.

15. *Ibid.*

16. *Ibid.*

17. Richardson, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

18. Lancaster County Miscellaneous Papers (1724-1772), Historical Society of Pennsylvania, p. 105.

19. Unger, *op. cit.*, pp. 969-70.

20. Manuscript collection, Pottsville Free Public Library.

21. *Ibid.*

22. *Ibid.*

23. D. C. Henning, *Tales of the Blue Mountains*, publications of the Historical Society of Schuylkill County, Vol. III (Pottsville, Pa., 1911).

24. Wheeler, *op. cit.*; Joseph B. Lebo, "Historian Corrects a Tradition of Long Ago," *Reading Eagle*, August 14, 1933.

25. Henning, *op. cit.* Vol. IV, No. 2, reports the names given by Count Zinzendorf to mountains, valleys, and streams that he crossed on the Tulpehocken Trail during his historic journey to Shamokin (now Sunbury) in 1742: "Erdmuth Spring" (probably Good Spring), honoring Zinzendorf's first wife, the Countess Erdmuth; "Anna's Valley" (Lykens Valley) for Anna Nitchmann, who was a member of the Shamokin-bound group and who, upon Countess Erdmuth's death in June, 1757, married Zinzendorf; "Double Eagle," where Spread Eagle Creek enters Mahantongo Creek; "Benigna Creek" (Mahantongo Creek), for the Moravian leader's daughter, the Countess Benigna. This stream was also known as "Kind Creek," probably for the reason that it was named for Zinzendorf's daughter, *Kind* in German meaning "child."

26. Unger, *op. cit.*, pp. 963-69.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 957.

28. Manuscript collection, Pottsville Free Public Library.

29. Wheeler, *op. cit.*, May 5, 1939.

30. Haas, *op. cit.*, pp. 142-43.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 66.

32. *Ibid.*, pp. 282-83.

33. Paul A. W. Wallace, *Conrad Weiser, 1696-1760: Friend of Colonist and Mohawk* (Philadelphia, 1945), pp. 154-55.

34. Wheeler, *op. cit.*

35. John Bartram, *Observations . . . from Pensilvania to Onondago, Oswego, and the Lake Ontario in Canada* (London, 1751). This is No. 248 of 300 copies reprinted in 1895, p. 79.

36. Wheeler, *op. cit.*

37. Evon Z. Vogt and Peggy Golde, "Some Aspects of the Folklore of Water Witching in the United States," *Journal of American Folklore*, LXXI, No. 282 (October-December, 1958), 519-31.

38. *Ibid.*, pp. 519-31.

39. Richard M. Dorson, *Bloodstoppers & Bearwalkers: Folk Traditions of the Upper Peninsula* (Cambridge, Mass., 1952), p. 115.

40. Vogt and Golde, *op. cit.*, p. 521.

41. *Ibid.*

42. Wheeler, *op. cit.*

43. Quoted by Wheeler, *op. cit.*

44. Haas, *op. cit.*, p. 84; Strong, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

45. Joseph H. Zerbey Newspapers, Inc., *History of Pottsville and Schuylkill County* (Pottsville, Pa., 1935), III, 1101-1102.

46. *The Gratz Sesquicentennial*, pp. 48-49.

47. Edwin Wolf, II, and Maxwell Whiteman, *The History of the Jews of Philadelphia from Colonial Times to the Age of Jackson* (Philadelphia, 1956-1957), p. 180.

48. Allen Johnson and Dumas Malone (eds.), *Dictionary of American Biography* (New York, 1931), III, 505; *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia* (New York, 1941), p. 86.

Rebecca Gratz belongs in this book because much of the Gratz family income was derived from anthracite mining dividends.

Miss Gratz often visited Saratoga Springs, and there met Washington Irving, fiancé of her intimate friend, Matilda Hoffman. Just before the wedding Miss Hoffman became a victim of tuberculosis during which illness Rebecca was at her bedside constantly. In this sick room she often met Irving. After his fiancée's death, the famous author went to Europe where he met Sir Walter Scott, the novelist, then plotting a new novel having Jews as principal characters. It was on this occasion that Washington Irving described Rebecca Gratz to him in glowing terms. Scott made her the heroine of his classic, *Ivanhoe*. In 1819 he sent Irving a copy of his new novel, and in a note wrote: "How do you like your Rebecca? Does the Rebecca I have pictured compare well with the pattern given?" In a letter, dated April 4, 1820, to her sister-in-law, Mrs. Benjamin Gratz of Lexington, Ky., Rebecca Gratz mentions the Rebecca of *Ivanhoe* as her namesake.

Miss Gratz served a long and productive life in Philadelphia as a pioneer social worker and philanthropist. She was unmarried. Early in life she turned down a proposal of marriage from Samuel Ewing who was acceptable to her in every way except in religion. Tolerant of intermarriage for other members of the Gratz family, she herself was unwilling to marry outside her faith, and she remained an observant Jewess to the end of her days.

49. Hyman Gratz (1776-1857) bequeathed to Congregation Mikveh Israel, Philadelphia's first synagogue, in trust, about \$150,000 "for the education of Jews residing in the city and county of Philadelphia." In 1893, under this will, Gratz College was established in Philadelphia as the first Jewish teachers' training school in the United States. (See *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*, V, 87.)

50. Joseph Jackson, *Encyclopedia of Philadelphia* (Harrisburg, 1932), III, 788; Wolf and Whiteman, *op. cit.*, p. 182.

51. Wolf and Whiteman, *op. cit.*, p. 182; *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society*, No. 2 (1894), p. 163.

52. The Williamstown (Pa.) *Times*, July 4, 1908; William Henry Egle, *History of the Counties of Dauphin and Lebanon in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, 1883), p. 450; Lloyd M. Bellis and C. H. Willier, "Simon Gratz and His People," *The Gratz Sesquicentennial*, p. 58.

53. Egle, *op. cit.*, p. 451.

54. Lloyd M. Bellis, *The Gratz Sesquicentennial*, pp. 84-85.

55. Wolf and Whiteman, *op. cit.*, p. 343.

56. *The Gratz Sesquicentennial*, p. 59.

CHAPTER 9

1. George Wheeler, "Annals of the Swatara," *West Schuylkill Press and Pine Grove Herald*, November 18, 1938 ff.; and George B. Haas, *History of Pine Grove, Schuylkill County* (Pottsville, Pa., 1935), pp. 78-79.

2. Haas, p. 88.

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 102-103.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 285.

5. *Ibid.*, pp. 100-101.

6. The Williamstown Times, July 4, 1908.
7. Haas, *op. cit.*, p. 105.
8. Marvin W. Schlegel, *Ruler of the Reading: The Life of Franklin B. Gowen (1836-1889)* (Harrisburg, 1947), p. 32.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 53.
10. Recorded September 23, 1957.
11. Joseph F. Patterson, "Old W.B.A. Days," *Publications of the Historical Society of Schuylkill County*, II, no. 4, 373-74.
12. Ele Bowen, *The Coal Regions of Pennsylvania* (Pottsville, Pa., 1848), p. 48.
13. Albert H. Fay, *A Glossary of the Mining and Mineral Industry*, Bulletin 95, Bureau of Mines, U. S. Department of the Interior (Washington, D. C., 1947), p. 302.
14. Joseph F. Patterson, "After the W.B.A.," *Publications of the Historical Society of Schuylkill County*, IV, no. 2, 181.
15. Alden Todd, "Coal through the Centuries," *United Mine Workers Journal*, June 1, 1959, p. 19.
16. *Ibid.*
17. Fay, *op. cit.*, p. 126.
18. Alexander Trachtenburg, *History of Legislation for the Protection of Coal Miners in Pennsylvania* (New York, 1942), pp. 33-35; Patterson, *op. cit.*, pp. 361-62.
19. Patterson, *op. cit.*, pp. 361-62.
20. Roger W. Babson, *W. B. Wilson and the Department of Labor* (New York, 1919), pp. 43-44.
21. George Korson, *Songs and Ballads of the Anthracite Miners*, Album XVI, Archive of Folk Song, Library of Congress.
22. Patterson, *op. cit.*, pp. 359-60.
- (Note 23 omitted.)
24. R. W. Brown, a pamphlet, *Some Aspects of Early Railroad Transportation in Pennsylvania* ("Address delivered before the Pennsylvania Historical Association, Dickinson College, Carlisle, Pa., October 21, 1949"), p. 11.
25. Schlegel, *op. cit.*, pp. 54-55.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 199.
27. *Ibid.*
28. *Ibid.*, p. 200.
29. *Ibid.*, pp. 286-87.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 287.
31. Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 11.
32. George Korson, "What Makes Us Strike?" in *Minstrels of the Mine Patch* (Philadelphia, 1938), pp. 219-20.
33. Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 12; the Supreme Court decision is dated April 26, 1920.

CHAPTER 10

1. The Stutzman genealogy based on data in Dr. R. H. Stutzman, pamphlet, *History of the Stutzman Family* (Hegins, Pa., 1933), pp. 5-10.

2. *Ibid.*

3. This was before the Pennsylvania Legislature had enacted minimum age laws for the protection of minors in industry. The Act of 1903 for the first time raised to 16 the age of boys employed inside anthracite and bituminous mines, and to 14 those working outside, mostly in coal breakers. Stricter laws were passed in later years. Alexander Trachtenberg, *History of Legislation for the Protection of Coal Miners in Pennsylvania* (New York, 1942), p. 204.

4. Recorded August 28, 1957.

5. Bruce L. Christ, recorded August 23 and 29, 1957.

6. Recorded July 31, 1957.

7. Ralph Kreamer, "Woman in New Columbus Bakes Bread in Old Oven," in "Carbon County Panorama," Allentown (Pa.) *Sunday Call-Chronicle*, July 29, 1956.

8. Mrs. Henry E. Wertz, recorded October 2, 1957.

9. Recorded August 30, 1957.

10. Ray Evelan, in Dutch dialect. Recorded October 13, 1957. Transcribed and translated by Albert F. Buffington.

CHAPTER 11

1. George B. Haas, *History of Pine Grove, Schuylkill County* (Pottsville, 1935), p. 92.

2. L. D. Lamont, recorded September 23, 1957. Also his letter of September 4, 1959, to me answering questions about the Lincoln Colliery. Lamont was one-time divisional superintendent of the Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company; the Lincoln was one of twenty-two collieries, many of them in the West End, under his supervision.

3. J. H. Zerbey Newspapers, Inc., *History of Pottsville and Schuylkill County, Pa.* (Pottsville, Pa., 1936), III, 1103.

4. Mrs. Henry E. Wertz, recorded October 2, 1957.

5. Haas, *op. cit.*, p. 105; Lamont letter (September 4, 1959).

6. Lamont letter.

7. Mrs. Wertz, recorded October 2, 1957.

8. Ray Evelan, in Dutch dialect. Recorded October 13, 1957; transcribed and translated by Albert F. Buffington.

9. I. Daniel Rupp, *History of Northampton, Lehigh, Monroe, Carbon, and Schuylkill Counties* (Harrisburg, 1845), p. 293.

10. Zerbey, Newspapers, Inc., *op. cit.*, III, 1320.

11. *Ibid.*, pp. 1278-79. For the legend, see "The Story of the Old Stone House," in George Korson, *Minstrels of the Mine Patch* (Philadelphia, 1938), pp. 170-77.

12. Joseph F. Patterson, "Reminiscences of John Maguire after Fifty Years of Mining," *Publications of the Historical Society of Schuylkill County* (1912), IV, No. 4, 305-36.

13. *Ibid.*

14. Bruce L. Christ, recorded August 23 and August 29, 1957.

15. John B. Bowman MS, Pottsville Free Public Library.

CHAPTER 12

1. Dr. Stine, a native of Pine Grove, and a descendant of original settlers, helped compile Haas's *History of Pine Grove, Schuylkill County*. He is dean of men at the Millersville State Teachers' College.
2. Recorded August 10, 1957.
3. R. H. H. Aungst, recorded August 12, 1957.
4. Source of the story about the Brookside Colliery experiment with the free-ticket privilege was attributed in the 1930's by the Schuylkill County unit of the W.P.A. to the late William K. Knecht, 74, founder-publisher of the West Schuylkill *Herald*, a weekly, in Tower City. Knecht was in a position to know about it firsthand. See W.P.A. collection in the Pottsville Free Public Library.
5. George B. Haas, *History of Pine Grove, Schuylkill County* (Pottsville, Pa., 1935), p. 105.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 106.
7. R. H. H. Aungst, recorded August 12, 1957.
8. Carl F. Maurer, recorded August 9, 1957.
9. Carl F. Maurer, recorded August 9, 1957.
10. R. H. H. Aungst, recorded August 12, 1957.

CHAPTER 13

1. Arthur D. Graeff, "Echoes from the Past," *'S Pennsylvawnish Deitsch Eck*, Allentown *Morning Call*, September 9, 1944.
2. *Ibid.*
3. Albert F. Buffington and Preston A. Barba, *A Pennsylvania German Grammar* (Allentown, Pa., 1954), p. 138.
4. *Ibid.*, pp. 1-2.
5. Dr. Fred L. Herring, recorded August 20, 1957.
6. Anna Salen, recorded July 31, 1957.
7. Recorded August 23, 1957.
8. Recorded August 1, 1957.
9. Recorded August 24, 1957.
10. Recorded August 23, 1957.
11. Recorded August 9, 1957.
12. Manuscript collection, Pottsville Free Public Library.
13. Horace G. Fetterolf, "The Village Preacher" *'S Pennsylvawnish Deitsch Eck*, Allentown *Morning Call*, May 11, 1935.
14. I heard Miss Singmaster tell this story in the Baptist Church, Lewisburg.
15. John B. Bowman MS, Pottsville Free Public Library.
16. Editorial, July 6, 1957.
17. John B. Bowman MS.
18. Recorded October 4, 1957.
19. Stanley Achenbach, recorded September 23, 1957.

20. Recorded July 19, 1957.
21. See Introduction to George Korson. *Songs and Ballads of the Anthracite Miner* (New York, 1927), and *Minstrels of the Mine Patch* (Philadelphia, 1938).
22. Recorded October 5, 1957.
23. Edith Patterson, recorded September 21, 1957.
24. Edith Patterson, recorded September 21, 1957.
25. Jacob Lurwick, recorded August 7, 1957.
26. Edith Patterson, recorded September 21, 1957.
27. Edith Patterson, recorded September 21, 1957.
28. Carl F. Maurer, unrecorded.
29. Carl F. Maurer.
30. Carl F. Maurer.
31. Carl F. Maurer.
32. Carl F. Maurer.
33. Carl F. Maurer.
34. Carl F. Maurer.
35. Carl F. Maurer.
36. Mary I. Sherk, recorded August 9, 1957.
37. Carl F. Maurer, unrecorded.
38. R. H. H. Aungst, recorded August 12, 1957.
39. Curtis "Bull" Maurer, recorded July 25, 1957.

CHAPTER 14

1. Based on manuscript by R. H. H. Aungst, and recording by Bruce L. Christ, August 29, 1957.
2. Mrs. Oren G. Umholtz, recorded August 21, 1957.
3. Recorded August 29, 1957.
4. Mrs. Umholtz, recorded August 21, 1957.
5. MacEdward Leach, "Separating Sword or Sword of Chastity," in *Standard Dictionary of Folklore Mythology and Legend*, ed. Maria Leach (New York, 1950), pp. 996-97.
6. Samuel Peters, *General History of Connecticut by a Gentleman of the Province* (London, 1781; 3d ed., New Haven, 1829).
7. George Elliott Howard, *A History of Matrimonial Institutions* (Chicago, 1904), II, 272.
8. *Little Known Facts about Bundling in the New World* (Harrisburg, 1938).
9. *Hollis v. Wells* in John A. Clark, *Pennsylvania Law Journal Reports*, III (Philadelphia, 1872), 169.
10. *Ibid.*
11. WPA Job 134, March 5, 1940.
12. *Ibid.*
13. WPA Job 134, February 13, 1940.
14. Recorded August 23, 1957.
15. WPA Job 134, March 5, 1940.
16. Carl F. Maurer, unrecorded.

17. *The Gratz Sesquicentennial* (Gratz, Pa., 1955), p. 124.
18. WPA Job 134, February 13, 1940.
19. Recorded August 29, 1957.
20. John B. Bowman MS; Bruce L. Christ, recorded August 23 and 29, 1957; Irvin J. Leffler, recorded August 23, 1957.
21. *The Gratz Sesquicentennial*, p. 72.
22. B. A. Botkin, "Charivari," in *Standard Dictionary of Folklore Mythology and Legend*, ed. Maria Leach (New York, 1949), I, 212.
23. John B. Bowman MS.
24. Ray Evelan, in Pennsylvania Dutch dialect. Recorded October 13, 1957. Transcribed and translated by Albert F. Buffington.
25. Mrs. Arthur Kline, recorded August 9, 1957.

CHAPTER 15

1. This sketch is based on an interview with Mrs. Lincoln English, of Donaldson, Dr. Moyer's daughter, recorded September 18, 1957.
2. Recorded July 31, 1957.
3. Recorded August 21, 1957.
4. Recorded September 21, 1957.
5. George Korson, *Minstrels of the Mine Patch* (Philadelphia, 1938), p. 189.
6. Alexander Trachtenburg, *History of Legislation for the Protection of Coal Miners in Pennsylvania* (New York, 1942), p. 38.
7. *Ibid.*
8. *Ibid.*, pp. 48-49.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 96.
10. Pottsville *Republican*, 75th anniversary edition, Sec. III, October 28, 1959, p. 25.
11. Dated April 10, 1958.

In the *Sunday Star Magazine*, published by *The Washington* (D.C.) *Star*, on February 16, 1958, there was a two-page picture story about my project written by Adele Chidakel. Dr. Jones read it and became interested in what I was trying to do. So he wrote Miss Chidakel to try to get my address. In that first letter, dated February 26, 1958, he had the following to say about himself: "I was born in Pottsville in April, 1877 and lived there until I graduated from Univ. of Penn'a in medicine in 1900. My father was the first paymaster of the P. & R. C. & I Co., having been appointed (I believe) in 1872 and remained in the same position until his death in 1927 . . ." Then followed several letters bearing on the subject of care of injured miners.

12. Edward Pinkowski, "Father of First Aid," in his book *Forgotten Fathers* (Philadelphia, 1953), pp. 63-81; John E. Mulherin, "50 Years of First Aid," *The Red Cross Courier*, January, 1950, pp. 12-14; E. Ross Wilkes, "Jermyn Celebrates Golden Anniversary," *The Red Cross Courier*, January, 1950, p. 15; George Korson, "First-Aid Training Is 50 Years Old in '60," *United Mine Workers Journal*, December 15, 1959.

13. Daniel J. Bergen, "25th Anniversary of 'Hex' Cat in Tumbling Run Valley,"

Pottsville *Journal*, September 7, 1936; Walter S. Farquhar, "Rediscovering the Hex Cat Farm," in "Editorial Musings" column, the Pottsville *Republican*, October 25, 1957; Farquhar's columns on this subject in the Pottsville *Journal*, October 31, 1941, and October 25, 1949. Recording by Farquhar, September 12, 1957.

14. The Reverend Thomas R. Brendle cited the following sources: Oskar Ebermann, *Blut und Wundsegen* (Berlin, 1903); Richard M. Dorson, *Bloodstoppers & Bear Walkers* (Cambridge, Mass., 1952); Carleton F. Brown, "The Long Hidden Friend," *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, April-June, 1904.

15. Recorded July 21, 1957.

16. John B. Bowman MS., Pottsville Free Public Library. According to Bowman, stone bugs were grey, about $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch long, found under dry stones. They rolled themselves into a grey ball when disturbed.

17. WPA collection, Pottsville Free Public Library.

18. *Ibid.*

19. *Ibid.*

20. *Ibid.*

21. *Ibid.*

22. *Ibid.*

23. Ella Zerbey Elliott, *Old Schuylkill Tales* (Pottsville, Pa., 1906) p. 241.

24. Recorded August 20, 1957.

CHAPTER 16

1. This information appears on the broadside.

2. *Der Himmelsbrief*, Allentown *Morning Call*, October 4, 1941.

3. George Korson, *Minstrels of the Mine Patch* (Philadelphia, 1938), p. 147.

4. Recorded September 21, 1957.

5. William Warren Sweet, "Religion in the Restless Thirties and Forties," in *The Story of Religions in America* (New York, 1930), pp. 373-411; Frederick Klees, "The Church People," in *The Pennsylvania Dutch* (New York, 1951), pp. 72-90. See also Don Yoder, "The Bench Versus the Catechism: Revivalism and Pennsylvania's Lutheran and Reformed Churches," *Pennsylvania Folklife*, Fall, 1959; also David H. Rapp, "The Attitude of the Early Reformed Church Fathers toward Worldly Amusements," *Pennsylvania Folklife*, Fall, 1958.

This was a struggle among Protestant denominations. While masses were said by itinerant priests in Pottsville and other Schuylkill County mining towns very early in the nineteenth century, the Roman Catholic Church did not arrive in the West End until 1853. In that year, Father Barr of St. John's German Catholic Church in Pottsville was assigned to take a census of Catholic families in that area. Father Barr counted forty Irish Catholic families in Middle Creek mine patch and an equal number in Donaldson. He also found German Catholics in Tremont, Tower City, and Newtown. Because the Irish were most numerous among Catholics in the West End, a church for them was built in Tremont in 1853 and called Immaculate Conception. There were already three Protestant churches in Tremont.

J. H. Zerbey Newspapers, Inc., *History of Pottsville and Schuylkill County, Pa.* (Pottsville, Pa., 1936), III, 1108.

(Notes 6, 7, 8 are omitted.)

9. Rev. Adam E. Polcrack, "Lutherans in This [Schuylkill] County since 1723; Hostile Indians Burned Their First Church," *Pottsville Republican*, 75th anniversary, October 29, 1959.

10. Wayland F. Dunaway, *A History of Pennsylvania* (New York, 1935), pp. 358-63, 446, 750-55.

11. Polcrack, *op. cit.*

12. *Ibid.*; and George B. Haas, *History of Pine Grove, Schuylkill County* (Pottsville, Pa., 1935), pp. 198-202.

13. Sweet, *op. cit.*, p. 190.

14. *Ibid.*

15. "Ups and Downs of Methodism: Jonathan Wynn One of the Earliest Preachers; First Tremont Service Was Held in Barroom," *Pottsville Republican*, 75th anniversary, October 29, 1959.

Zerbey, *op. cit.*, III, 1108.

16. Zerbey, *op. cit.*, p. 1108.

17. Haas, *op. cit.*, pp. 299-300.

18. *Ibid.*, pp. 219-20.

19. *Ibid.*, pp. 223-24.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 222.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 223.

22. Recorded August 29, 1957.

23. Haas, *op. cit.*, p. 223.

24. Recorded August 23, 1957. Levi Miller, Sr., and Jr., are both buried in St. John's Cemetery, Pine Grove. The headstone of Levi, Sr., gives his birth date as "Oct. 10, 1810," and then "Aged 77 years." That of Levi, Jr., simply gives his lifespan, "1853-1910."

25. Recorded August 29, 1957.

The Methodist Church episode story is based on Haas's *History of Pine Grove, Schuylkill County*, two recorded interviews with elderly Pine Grove residents who had their information firsthand from those who had been participants, on an interview with one of these two men found in the WPA collection at the Pottsville Free Public Library, and on a letter from a resident of Pine Grove.

26. Haas, *op. cit.*, p. 140.

27. Recorded August 29, 1960.

28. Klees, *op. cit.*, pp. 349-50; Haas, *op. cit.*, pp. 139-40.

29. Haas, *op. cit.*, pp. 139-40.

30. Haas, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

31. Moravians excel in this folk art, and some of the best *putzes* may be found in Bethlehem.

32. Rev. Dr. Daniel I. Sultzbach, recorded September 3, 1957.

33. Anna Daubert Green, recorded September 9, 1957.

34. Haas, *op. cit.*, p. 142.

35. *Ibid.*, pp. 141-42.

36. These traditional practices have long since given way to commercial dyes and candy eggs.

37. Klees, *op. cit.*, p. 346; Haas, *op. cit.*, p. 214.
38. Herrwood E. Hobbs, "Farmers Quit Fields Ascension Day To Worship in Old White Church," *The Pottsville Republican*, 75th anniversary edition, October 29, 1959.
39. Mrs. Nellie McDonald, recorded October 2, 1957.
40. *The New York Times*, December 5, 1958.
41. J. Hampton Haldeman, recorded September 9, 1957.
42. Collier Rhoads, "More of Winter If Groundhog Recoils from Shadow Tuesday," Norristown (Pa.) *Times-Herald*, February 1, 1960.
43. Haas, *op. cit.*, p. 144; Bruce L. Christ, recorded August 29, 1957.
44. Thomas R. Brendle and Claude W. Unger, *Folk Medicine of the Pennsylvania Germans: The Non-Occult Cures* (Norristown, Pa., 1935), p. 25.
45. Alexander Trachtenberg, *History of Legislation for the Protection of Coal Miners in Pennsylvania* (New York, 1942), pp. 19 f., 100 f., 197 ff.
46. Brendle and Unger, *op. cit.*, p. 26.
47. *Ibid.*
48. Bruce L. Christ, recorded August 29, 1957.
49. Bruce L. Christ, recorded August 29, 1957.
50. Based on a letter from Edith Patterson, June 7, 1960.
51. Based on a letter from Edith Patterson, May 16, 1960.
52. Haas, *op. cit.*, pp. 208-10; anecdotes by John Haas, recorded September 5, 1957; and by Ray Evelan, recorded October 13, 1957.
53. David A. Lengle, recorded July 21, 1957.
54. Ray Evelan, recorded in the Dutch dialect October 13, 1957. Transcribed and translated by Albert F. Buffington.
55. John B. Bowman MS., Pottsville Free Public Library.

CHAPTER 17

1. Rev. Thomas R. Brendle and William S. Troxell, *Pennsylvania German Folk Tales, Legends: Once-Upon-A-Time Stories, Maxims and Sayings* (Norristown, Pa., 1944).
2. Recorded August 20, 1957; variant recorded September 5, 1957.
The Brethren or Dunkards, also called Dunkers, are a group of "plain people" among the Pennsylvania Dutch. They differ from all other Protestant sects by their baptismal method: dipping three times face forward in a stream. Their "love feast" is a church service that opens with unaccompanied hymn singing and continues with testimony giving, sermons by a bishop and other ministers, intermingled with more hymn singing, the Biblical rite of foot washing, concluded by a supper commemorating the Passover.
3. William H. Newell, "Legends and Traditions of Schuylkill County," a paper read before the Historical Society of Schuylkill County, January 31, 1912.
4. Louis C. Jones, *Things That Go Bump in the Night* (New York, 1959), p. 19.
5. Ray Evelan, recorded in the Pennsylvania Dutch dialect, October 13, 1957; transcribed and translated by Albert F. Buffington.
6. Christ Geiger, WPA collection in the Pottsville Free Public Library.

7. Mrs. Walter Lash, recorded September 18, 1957.
Mrs. William Haas recorded a variant of this tale on September 23, 1957.
8. Theodore R. Ebert, recorded August 6, 1957.
9. Theodore R. Ebert, recorded August 6, 1957.
10. Theodore R. Ebert, recorded August 6, 1957.
11. Theodore R. Ebert, recorded August 6, 1957.
12. Theodore R. Ebert, recorded August 6, 1957.
13. Theodore R. Ebert, recorded August 6, 1957.
14. Theodore R. Ebert, recorded August 6, 1957.
15. Theodore R. Ebert, recorded August 6, 1957.
16. Manuscript collection, Pottsville Free Public Library.
17. See George Korson, *Minstrels of the Mine Patch* (Philadelphia, 1938), pp. 189-91, for the ballad "The Avondale Mine Disaster."
18. Frank Troutman recorded September 18, 1957. Troutman died in Good Samaritan Hospital, Pottsville, Pa., June 19, 1958.
19. Charles A. Brenner, recorded July 14, 1957.
20. John Pierson, retired. For many years Pierson was the general superintendent of the Mahanoy City Division of the Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company; recorded July 17, 1957.
21. Theodore R. Ebert, recorded August 6, 1957.
22. Theodore R. Ebert, recorded August 6, 1957.
23. Theodore R. Ebert, recorded August 6, 1957.
24. Ralph Kantner, recorded September 5, 1957.

CHAPTER 18

1. Pennsylvania Laws, 1870.
2. Pennsylvania Laws, 1885.
3. *United Mine Workers Journal*, March 1, 1960, p. 9.
4. George Korson, *Songs and Ballads of the Anthracite Miner* (New York, 1927), pp. 103-104. Full ballad in Korson, *Minstrels of the Mine Patch* (Philadelphia, 1938), pp. 115-16.
5. Mrs. Henry E. Wertz, recorded October 2, 1957.
6. Frank Miller, recorded July 19, 1957.
7. Charles Solt, recorded July 19, 1957.
8. "A White Slave of the Mine," Korson, *Minstrels*, pp. 114-15.
9. "The Door Boy's Last Good-bye," *ibid.*, pp. 116-17.
10. Ralph Kantner, recorded September 5, 1957. Variant transcribed and translated by Albert F. Buffington.
11. Federal Writers' Project, Schuylkill County Unit, WPA collection, Pottsville Free Public Library.
12. Korson, *Minstrels*, pp. 122-23.
13. Recorded July 17, 1957.
14. Russell Wieder Gilbert, *Pennsylvania History Studies: No. 1*, The Pennsylvania Historical Association (Gettysburg, Pa., 1947), p. 51.
15. Charles Solt, recorded July 19, 1957.

16. Mrs. Henry E. Wertz, recorded October 2, 1957.
17. Ralph Kantner, recorded September 5, 1957. Kantner was 79 at the time of the interview. He was a miners' labor leader for many years.
18. Charles "Mule" Haas, recorded September 22, 1957.
19. William W. Lewis, recorded September 29, 1957.
20. Arthur H. Henninger, recorded September 5, 1957.
21. Arthur H. Henninger, recorded September 5, 1957.
22. Transcribed and translated by Albert F. Buffington.
23. Dr. Fred L. Herring, recorded August 20, 1957.
24. E. Louise Bigler, recorded October 5, 1957.
25. William W. Lewis, recorded September 29, 1957.
26. William W. Lewis, recorded September 29, 1957.
27. William W. Lewis, recorded September 29, 1957.
28. William W. Lewis, recorded September 29, 1957.
29. George B. Haas, *History of Pine Grove, Schuylkill County, Pa.* (Pottsville, Pa., 1935), p. 149.
30. E. Louise Bigler, recorded October 5, 1957.
31. E. Louise Bigler, recorded October 5, 1957.
32. E. Louise Bigler, recorded October 5, 1957.
33. E. Louise Bigler, recorded October 5, 1957.
34. E. Louise Bigler, recorded October 5, 1957.
35. E. Louise Bigler, recorded October 5, 1957.
36. E. Louise Bigler, recorded October 5, 1957.

CHAPTER 19

1. Rev. Thomas R. Brendle and William S. Troxell, *Pennsylvania German Folk Tales* (Norristown, Pa., 1944), p. 122.
2. *Ibid.*, see footnote, p. 122.
3. When translated, this nom de plume means "druggist" or "pharmacist."
4. J. Hampton Haldeman, recorded September 9, 1957.
5. Irvin J. Leffler, recorded August 23, 1957.
6. Brendle and Troxell, *op. cit.*
7. Marvin W. Schlegel, *Ruler of the Reading: The Life of Franklin B. Gowen, 1836-1889* (Harrisburg, Pa., 1947), p. 290.
8. Irvin J. Leffler, recorded August 23, 1957.
9. Schlegel, *op. cit.*
10. *Ibid.*, p. 121.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 115.
12. First Annual Report of the Bureau of Statistics, Labor and Agriculture for 1872-73, *Pennsylvania Legislative Documents*, Vol. I (1874).
13. John Heron Lepper, *Famous Secret Societies* (London, 1921), pp. 237-50.
14. J. Walter Coleman, *The Molly Maguire Riots* (Richmond, Va., 1936), pp. 40-69.
15. George Korson, *Minstrels of the Mine Patch* (Philadelphia, 1938), pp. 244-47.

16. Coleman, *op. cit.*, pp. 53, 60.
17. Coleman, *op. cit.*, p. 32.
18. For more details on the Molly Maguires and Molly songs, see Korson, *Minstrels*.
19. Coleman, *op. cit.*, pp. 56, 158-62, 165; Schlegel, *op. cit.*, pp. 142-43, 145-46; J. H. Battle, *History of Columbia and Montour Counties* (Chicago, 1887), pp. 88-90; Edwin M. Barton, *History of Columbia County, Pennsylvania* (Bloomsburg, Pa., 1958), p. 76.
20. Mrs. Kahler was born on February 27, 1870.
21. To verify Mrs. Kahler's reference to Sheriff Hoffman, see John G. Freeze, *History of Columbia County, Pennsylvania* (Bloomsburg, Pa., 1883), p. 127.
22. Mrs. Howard Kahler, Sr., recorded June 29, 1958.
23. Schlegel, *op. cit.*, p. 142.
24. *Ibid.*
25. *Ibid.*, p. 148.
26. Kehoe spells the name as "McFarland" throughout the column. The detective's real name was McParlan.
27. Mrs. Gregg G. Bovee, interviewed June 28, 1958.
28. Harry Murphy, interviewed September 20, 1957.
29. Writers' Project, Schuylkill County Unit, WPA. Christ Geiger, reporter.
30. Manuscript collection, Pottsville Free Public Library.

CHAPTER 20

1. E. L. Bullock Papers, Pottsville Free Public Library.
2. Anecdote by Robert E. Howe, Washington, D.C., "There's Always a Poet," *United Mine Workers Journal*, September 1, 1959.
3. George Korson, *Minstrels of the Mine Patch* (Philadelphia, 1938), p. 6.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 13; George Korson, *Songs and Ballads of the Anthracite Miner* (New York, 1927), pp. 89-91.
5. In the introductions to *Songs and Ballads of the Anthracite Miner*, and *Minstrels of the Mine Patch*.
6. Korson, *Songs and Ballads*, Introduction, p. x.
7. Korson, *Minstrels*, pp. 196-97; and *Songs and Ballads*, p. 144.
8. Korson, *Minstrels*, pp. 46-47; Korson, *Songs and Ballads*, p. 144.
9. Duncan Emrich, "Songs of the Western Miners," *California Folklore Quarterly*, I, No. 3 (1942), 229.
10. Freeman H. Hubbard, "Railroaders," in *Pennsylvania Songs and Legends*, ed. George Korson (Philadelphia, 1949), pp. 289-325.
11. William Main Doerflinger, *Shantymen and Shantyboys* (New York, 1951), pp. 213-15.
12. Franz Rickaby, *Ballads and Songs of the Shanty-Boy* (Cambridge, Mass., 1926), Introduction.
13. Harry Botsford, "Oilmen," in *Pennsylvania Songs and Legends*, pp. 401-22.
14. Wayland D. Hand *et al.*, "Songs of the Butte Miners," *Western Folklore*, IX, No. 1 (1950).

15. *Ibid.*
16. *Ibid.*
17. Jacob A. Evanson, "Folk Songs of an Industrial City," in *Pennsylvania Songs and Legends*, pp. 423-66.
18. *Ibid.*
19. George Korson, *Coal Dust on the Fiddle* (Philadelphia, 1943), pp. 441-44.
20. *Ibid.*, pp. 444-46.
21. Quoted in Evelyn Foster Morneweck, *Chronicles of Stephen Foster's Family* (Pittsburgh, 1944), II, 486.
22. Korson, *Minstrels*, pp. 122-23.
23. Pottsville *Republican*, 75th anniversary edition, October 29, 1959.
24. Certified copy of Certificate of Death from State Division of Vital Statistics issued September 3, 1957.
25. This account of the Brookside mine disaster is based mainly on the August, 1913, file of the Pottsville *Republican*.
26. I interviewed Michael Tallon about his father on the state highway between Tremont and Tower City on August 7, 1957.
27. Certified copy of Certificate of Death, State Division of Vital Statistics issued on September 3, 1957.

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All place names are in Pennsylvania unless otherwise identified. Towns and cities are assumed to be in Schuylkill County unless otherwise identified. Mauch Chunk is now legally Jim Thorpe.

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